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OLE ANN



JEANNETTE GRACE WATSON

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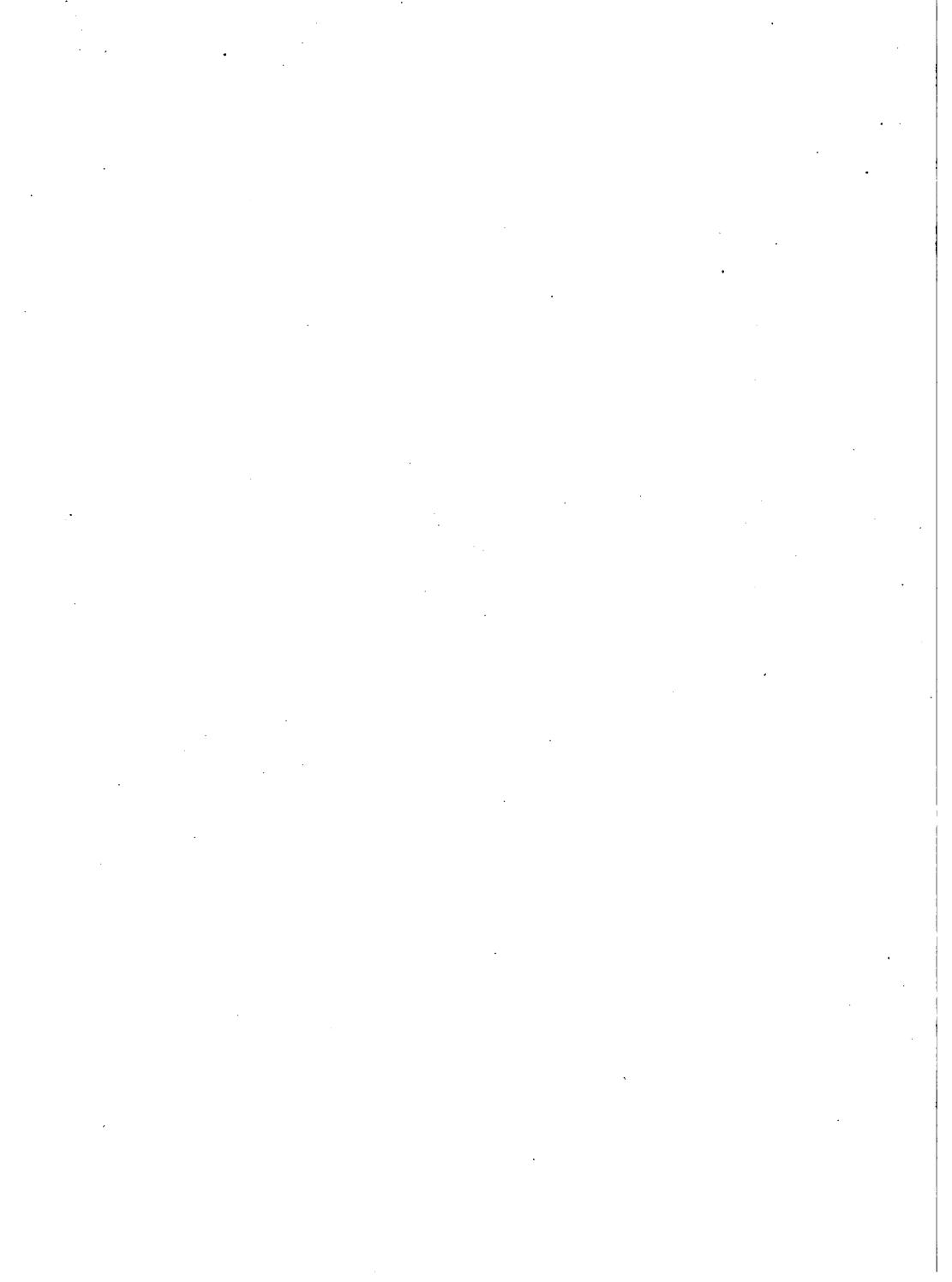


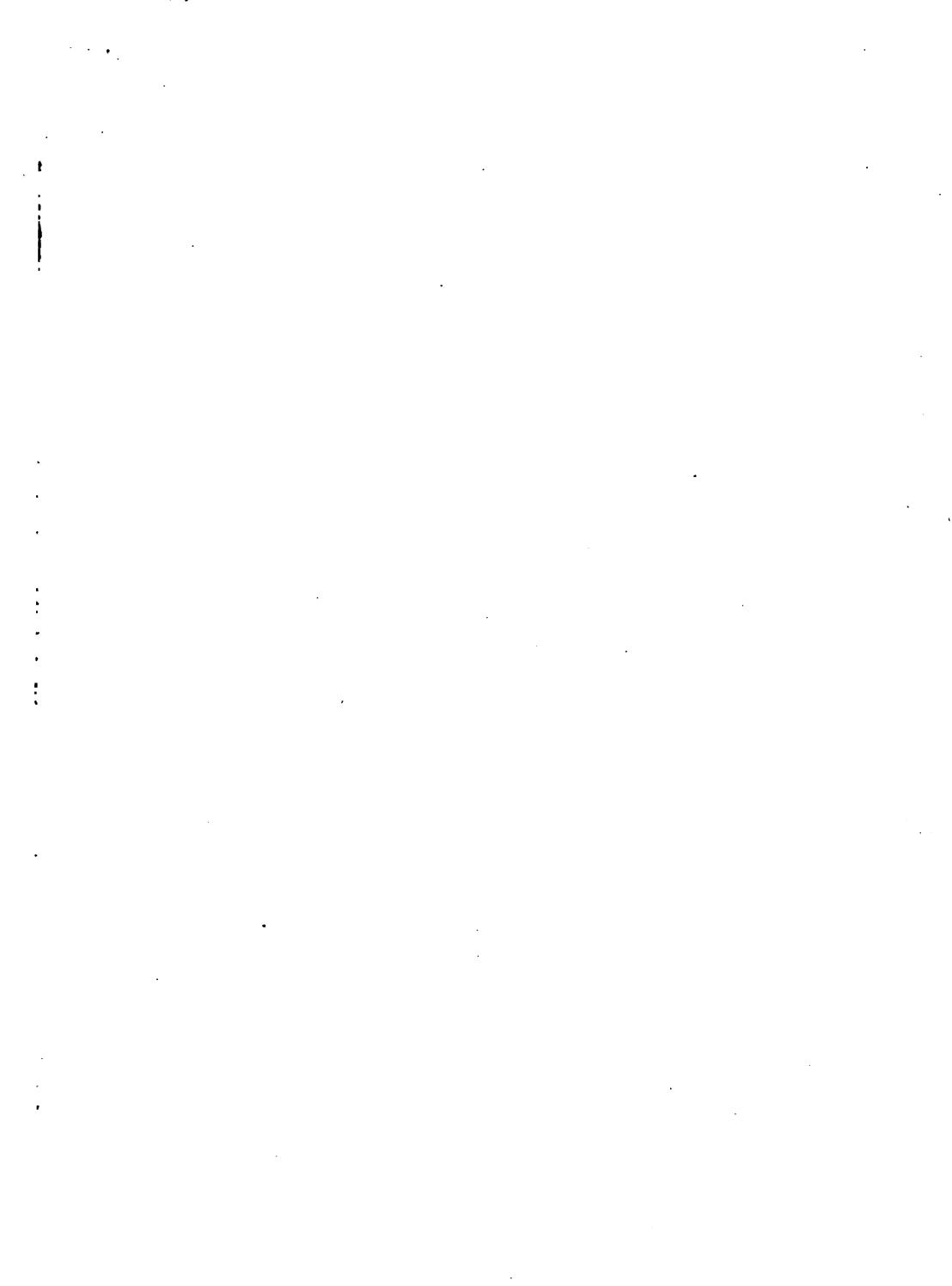
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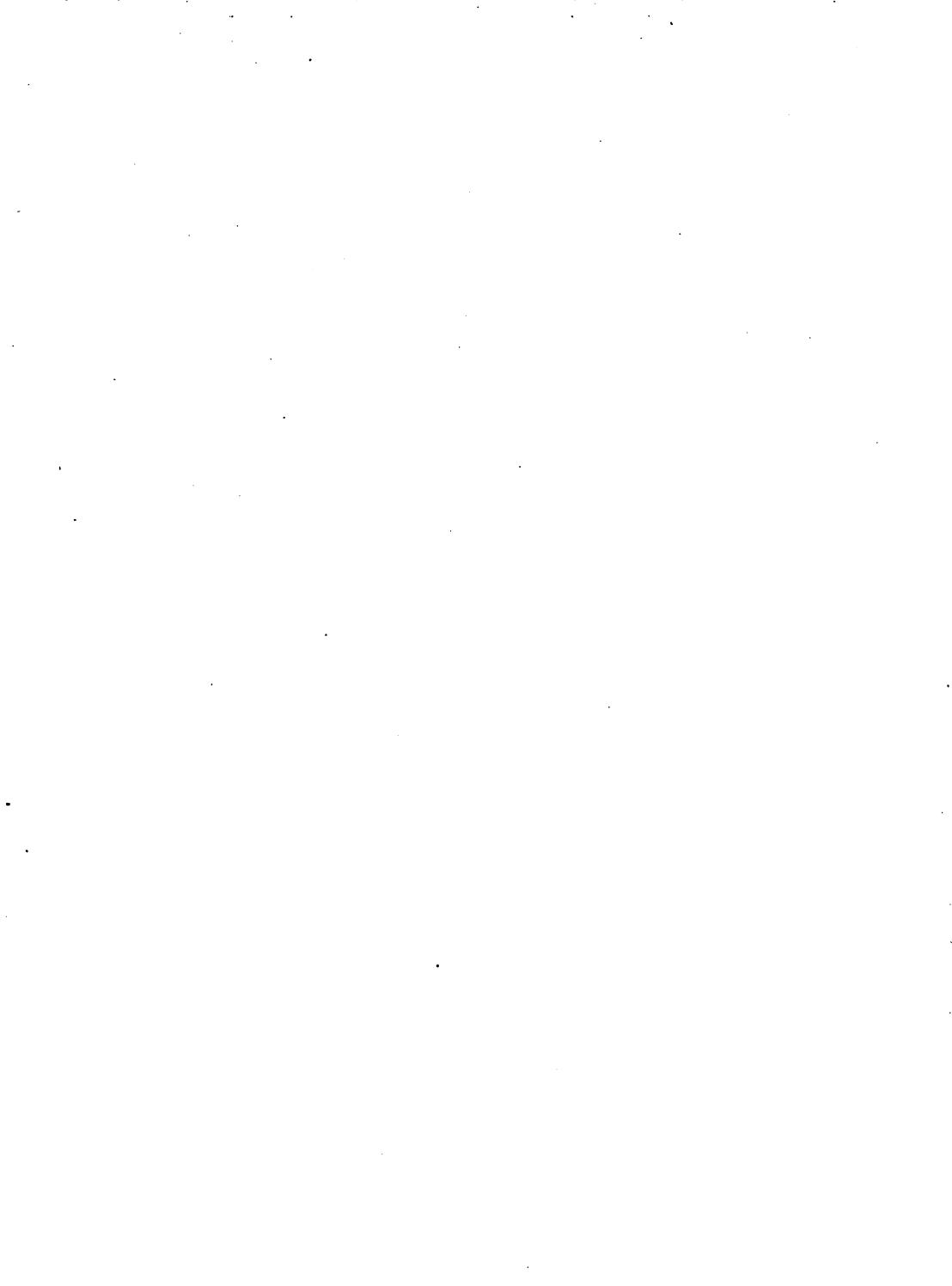
1918













AUNT JANE'S LITTLE CABIN.

OLE ANN

AND

OTHER STORIES

BY

JEANNETTE GRACE WATSON

ILLUSTRATED BY

BERTHA ROCKWELL

THE SAALFIELD PUBLISHING COMPANY

NEW YORK

AKRON, OHIO

CHICAGO

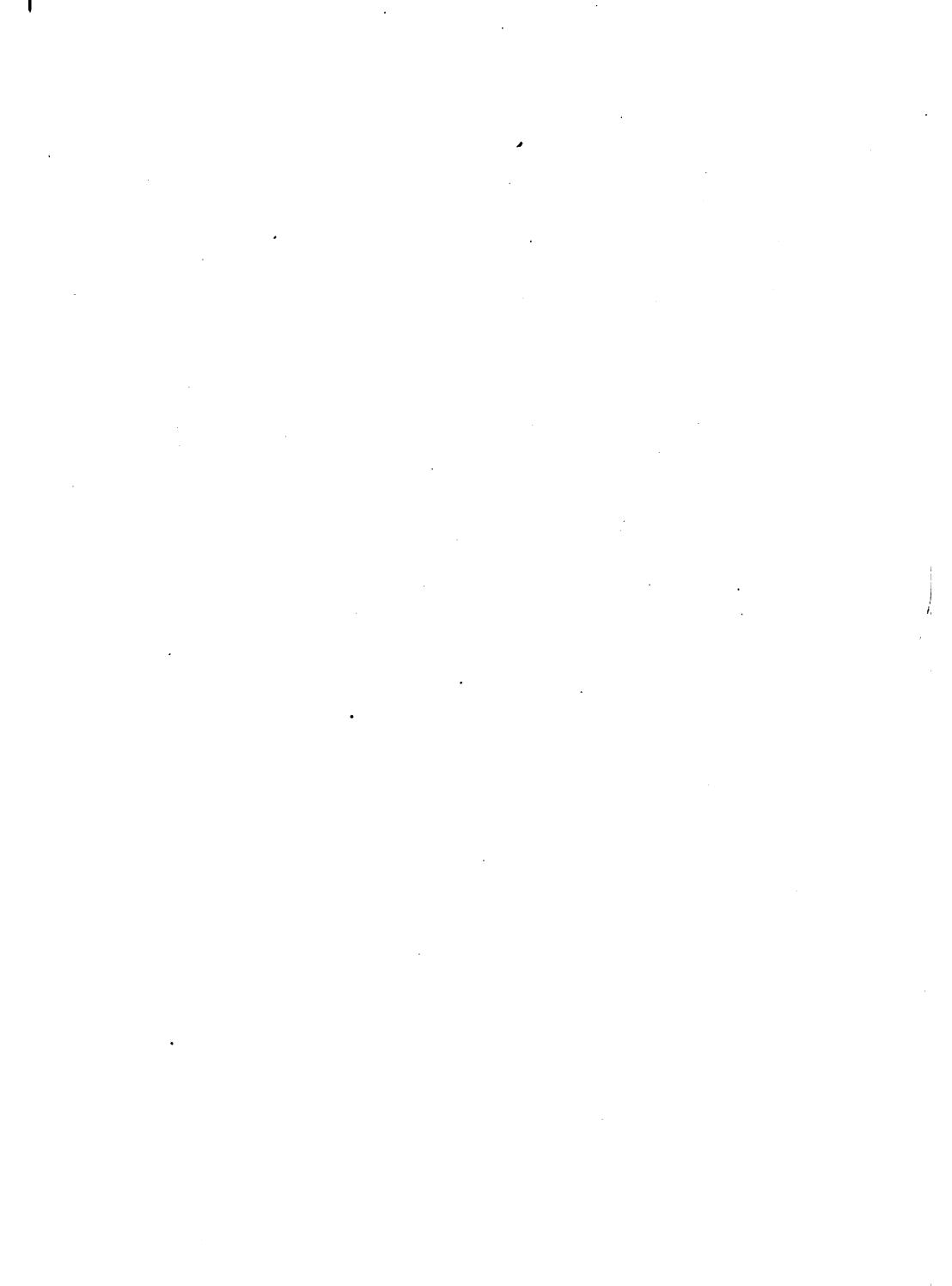
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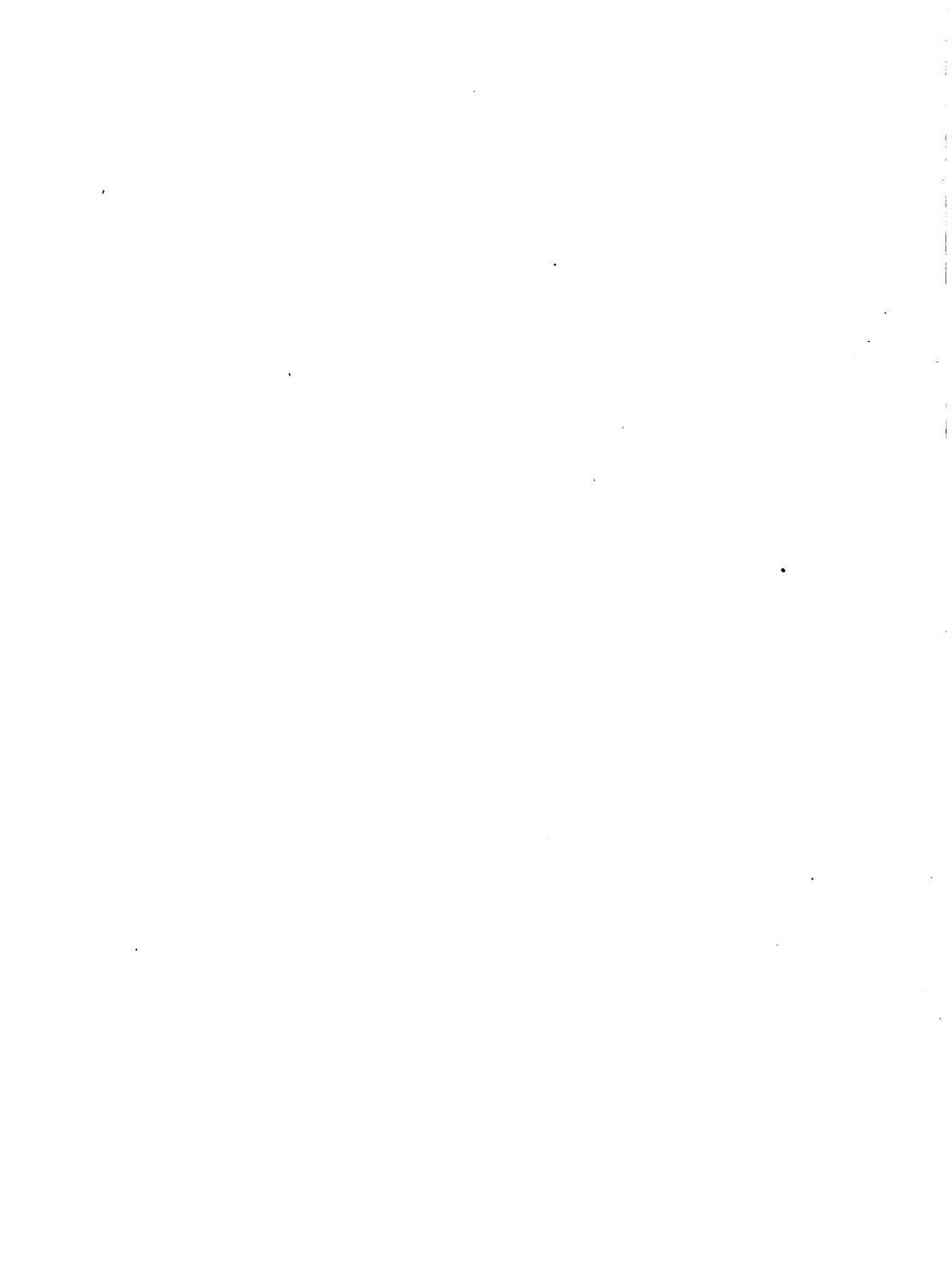
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To the faithful old shadows,
Who so emphasized the sunshine of my early life,
These stories are affectionately dedicated.



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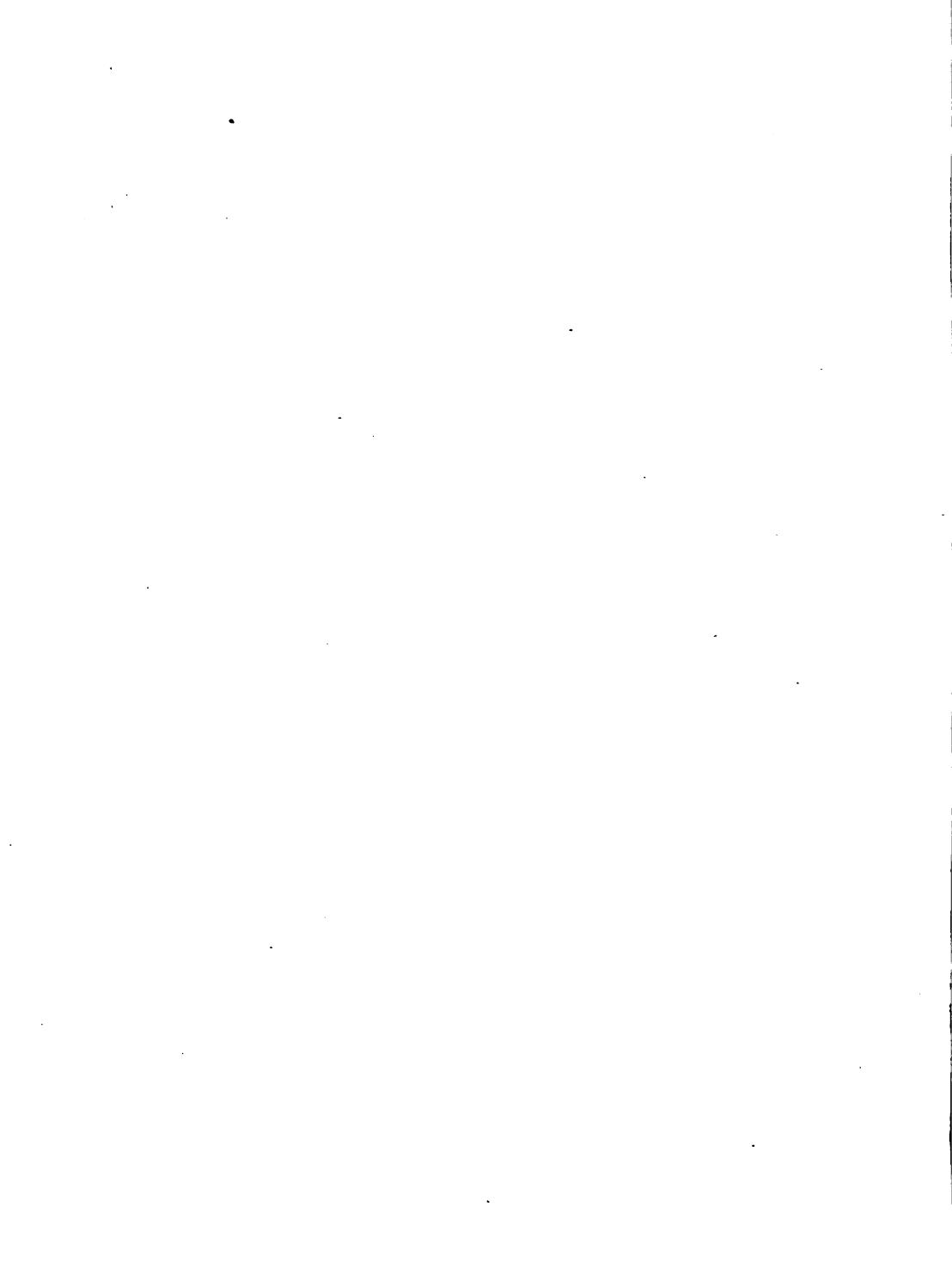


ILLUSTRATIONS

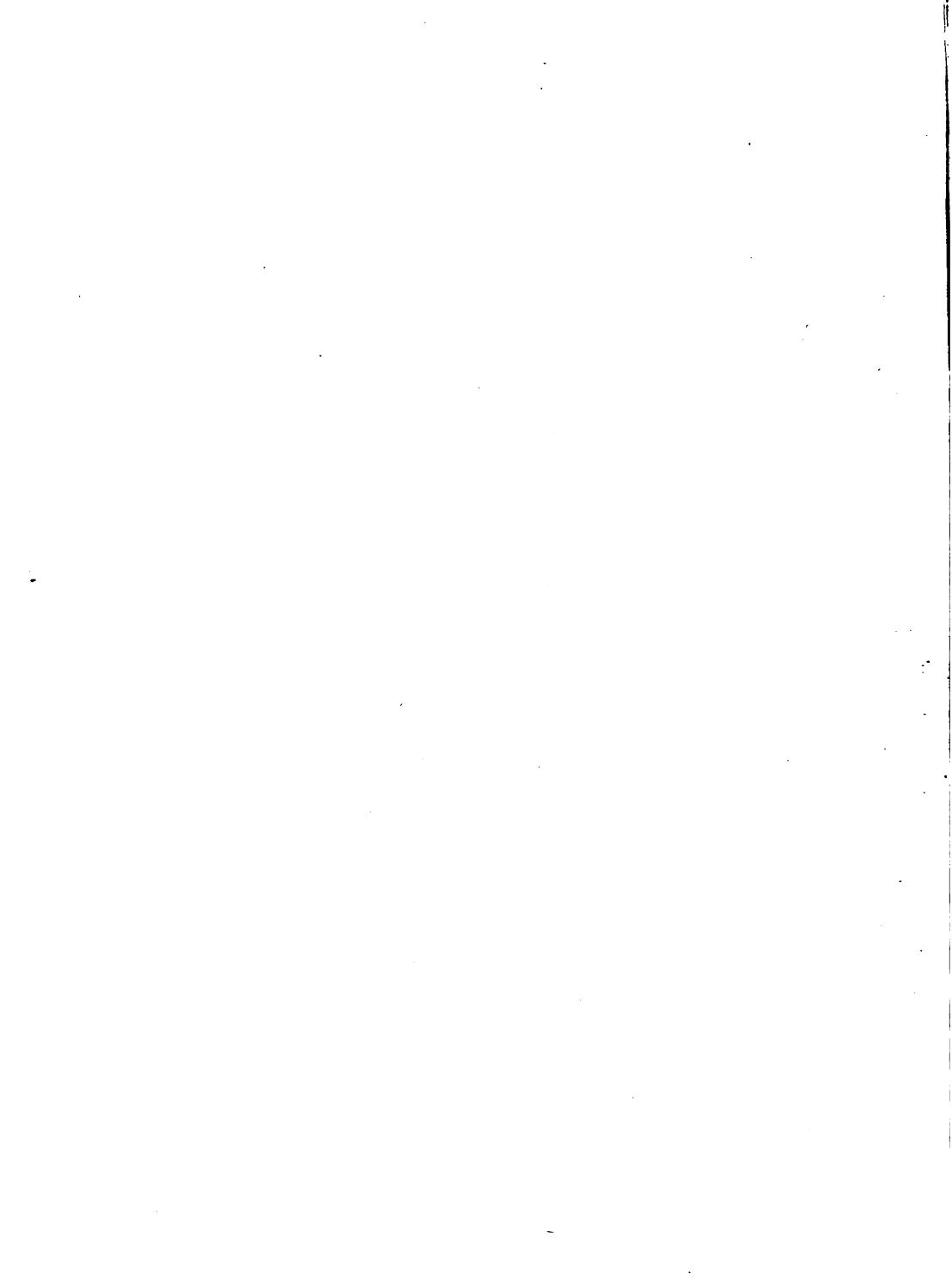
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*"Oh come, mah lill' white baby,
Ize singin' soff an' low,
Foh de sleep hant am a waitin'
An' you sho'ly wants tuh go."*

—*From an old Missouri lullaby.*



Ole Gunn



OLE ANN.

 S you m'ah wantin' someone tuh wash?"

The speaker was a tall and a very, very black woman, and she was young. She led by the hand a little child, scantily clad, its kinky hair wrapped with innumerable bits of twine.

She spoke to two little girls who were perched upon two high gate-posts, under the shadow of some fine old maple trees. Children who live in unfenced yards miss all the fun of having gate-posts to perch on, a fence to climb, a gate to swing on, and certainly half the fun of running away.

"We don't know," said the eldest, as with much struggling she climbed down, and opened the gate to let the woman and child in. Around the house they went, together; the two white children eyeing the black one, and all four rather relieved when Mother appeared at the doorway. "Is you wantin' some one tuh wash?"

queried the woman; and Mother said that she was.

The woman had walked seven miles in search of work, and her home was in Quindaro. She said: "Ize got lots ob chilluns, an' dis heah one she jess won' be leff. Whar I goes, I has tuh tote huh."

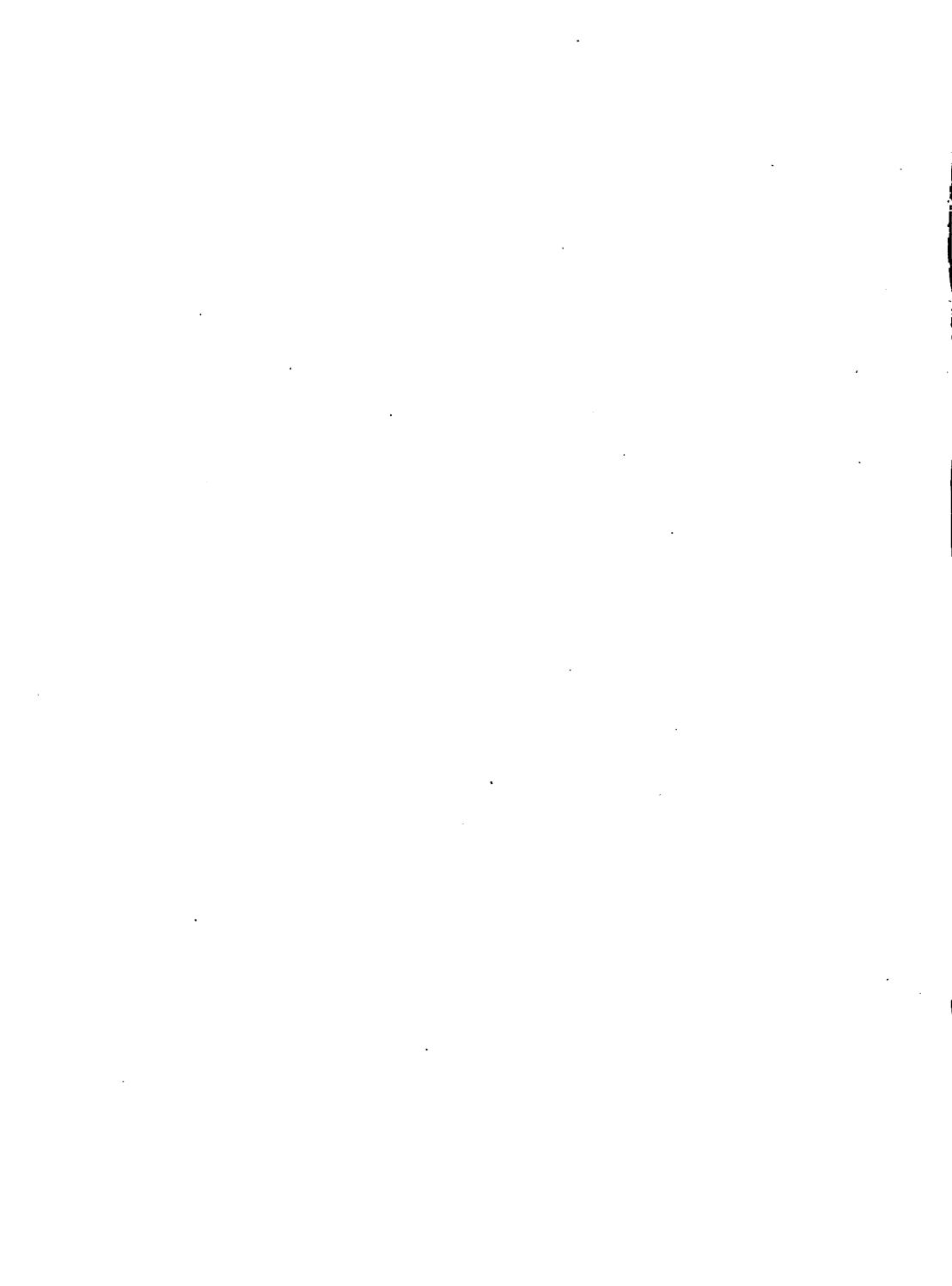
"Ole Ann" was duly engaged, and for many years she plodded back and forth; coming on Monday mornings, going home on Wednesday evenings; the little child, Black Belle, always with her.

"Ole Ann" was faithfulness itself, and when we asked her why she always called herself "Ole Ann" she explained that it had always been "Ole Ann," even when she was a child. Her husband's name was Mosley, and he was a little, weazened, and very badly freckled man. She seemed to hold him in special detestation, and when some one asked her how she came to marry a man whom she so much despised, she said:—

"Mosley, he's a well-diggah; I nevah did see him in de day-time; he wuz always down wells, an' he co'ted me ob evenin's. If I had evah had a right good



"IS YOU M'AH WANTIN' SOMEONE TUH WASH?"



look at him, I nevah would 'a had him—sho'ley."

"Ole Ann" prospered, and bought a shackley, little, old two-wheeled cart, and then a little donkey whose tail was very stubby, and whose coat looked moth-eaten. I am sure that the donkey never had a square meal, save on the days when he brought "Ole Ann" in and "fetched" her home.

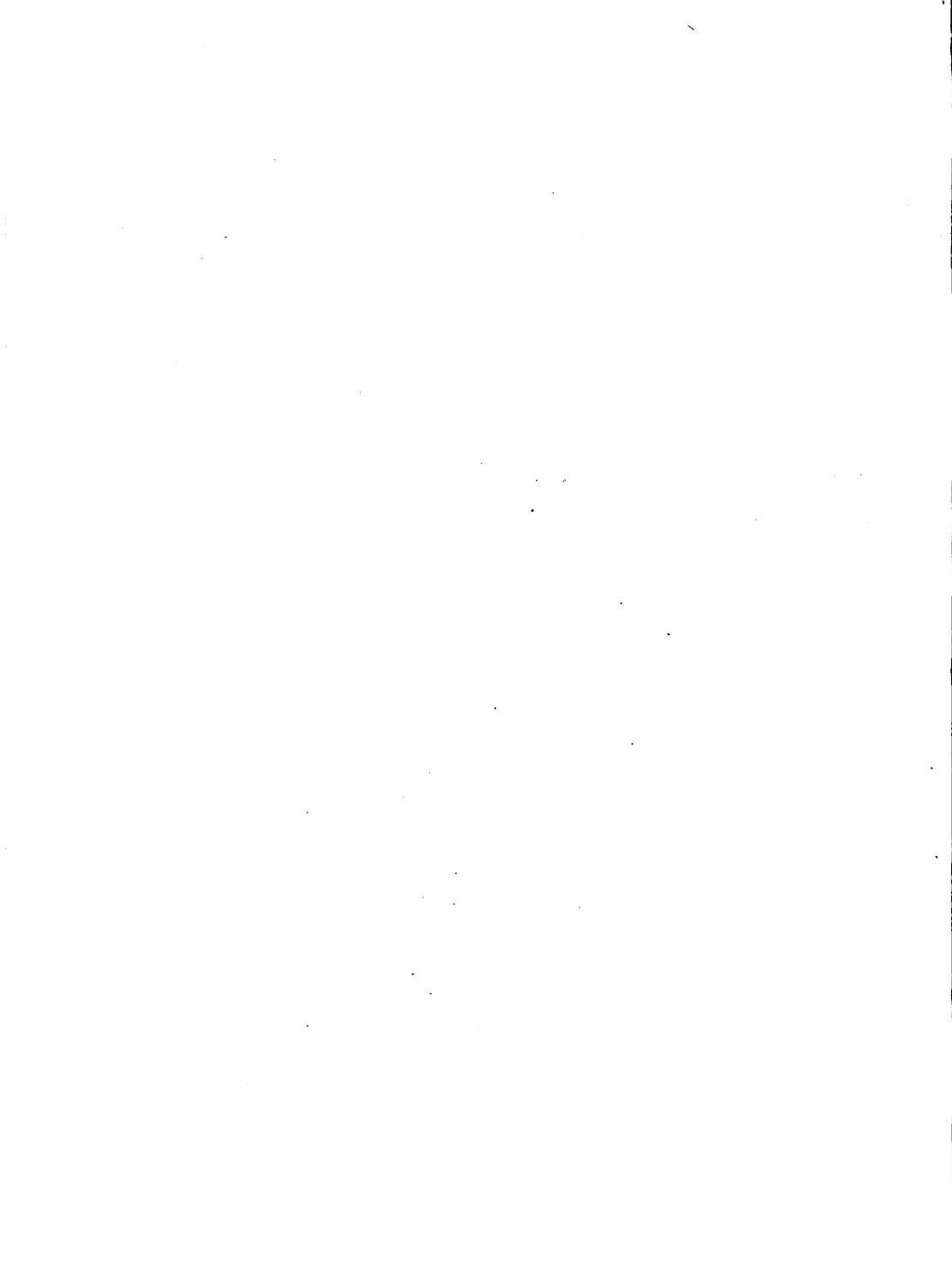
With the advent of the donkey the mistress's woes began. Things began to disappear. "Ole Ann" never stole, but where could the things go, since they only disappeared on Wednesdays? An investigation of the contents of the cart, one Wednesday evening, revealed various packages of tea and sugar, soap, and even matches. When confronted with these evidences of guilt, "Ole Ann" politely announced that she "Nevalh stole in all hu'n bohn life"—"she jess borried a few things foh tuh use."

Her habit of "borrowing" grew so strong that the family had to part with her; but she bore them no malice, and to this day visits them. They are always

glad to see her, but they stay with her until she is ready to depart. Her children have married and gone, the city has followed her into the country, and the little squatter's cabin in Quindaro is to-day the home of a very well-to-do negress. Mosley is dead, and "Ole Ann" says "It do jess beat all how a pusson kin miss such a no-count niggah."

Monon

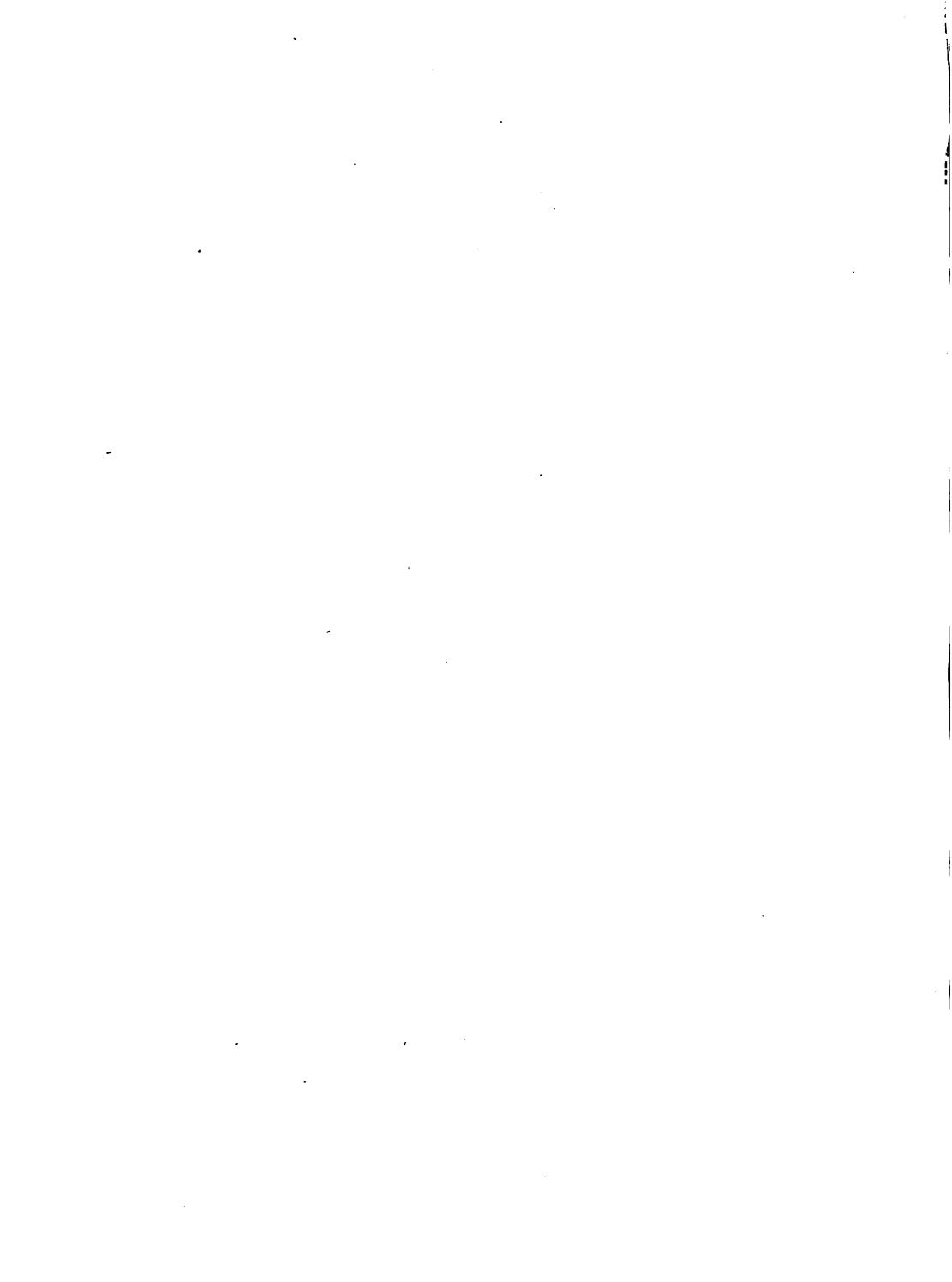
(23)





MONON STOOD THERE EYEING HIS MASTER.

(25)



MONON.



UT on one of the city's boulevards you may drive, your road just skirting a lovely stretch of hills, until you come to a small town, now a part of the city—once three miles away. This section used to be famous for its myriad bushes of wild roses, lovely beyond compare at blossoming time; there they grow even now, all over the banks of the creeks.

In this suburb there were once large mills and factories, but steel rails have taken the place of the iron ones, and the old mills are looked after by a caretaker now. The big houses, built for the owners, have passed into other hands; the little fruit trees that they planted are orchards now, and the paved white boulevard, with its rows of houses, and its swift electric cars, stretches over the winding way where my lady used to drive her basket-phaeton and cream-colored ponies, when the roads were good.

Up in a big white house on the hill lived a family who liked the country life and the beautiful park in which the house stood. As was the custom in those days, they employed only negro servants. The colored race is eminently a social race; so the people like to work in twos and threes, preferring to take smaller wages for the sake of the company. Here, there was the cook and her daughter, some days in the week a laundress, and always Monon.

Monon had been in slavery. He was as black as ebony, and his hair was snow white. He did not seem old, for he was a square, sturdy sort of a man, who might have borne burdens in his youth if he had had a stern owner, for a lazier man than Monon never existed.

His master always laid in a store of wood during the summer for the winter's use, and of course, wanted it sawed and split, and put away to dry. Monon never could see the sense of splitting more than enough for immediate use. "White folks," he would say, "white

folks dey is so res'less. Dey ain't Christians, or dey surtinly would know dat de Lawd didn' 'tend foh dem tuh be providin' foh so many days ahead, foh it sho'ley am against de Scriptuah."

"Marse Charles," he would say to his master's young son, "Marse Charles, is you as strong as me? Could you liff and split dis heah big, knotty fellah?"

Of course Marse Charles could, and did; so that by the most adroit flattery Monon often found his tasks lightened, and sometimes avoided them altogether.

The family owned a fine dog, a pretty, intelligent pointer, "Watch." In the winter, Watch always slept in the furnace cellar, and one night when her mistress went to call her, there lay the good dog, dead. There was grief and some tears, when Monon buried Watch the next day up on the hillside under the mulberry tree, where she had caught a coon.

"Poah Watchie," said Monon. "Poah Watchie, you didn' live half long nuff, shuah, an' I reckon you could tell de tas'e ob poison now."

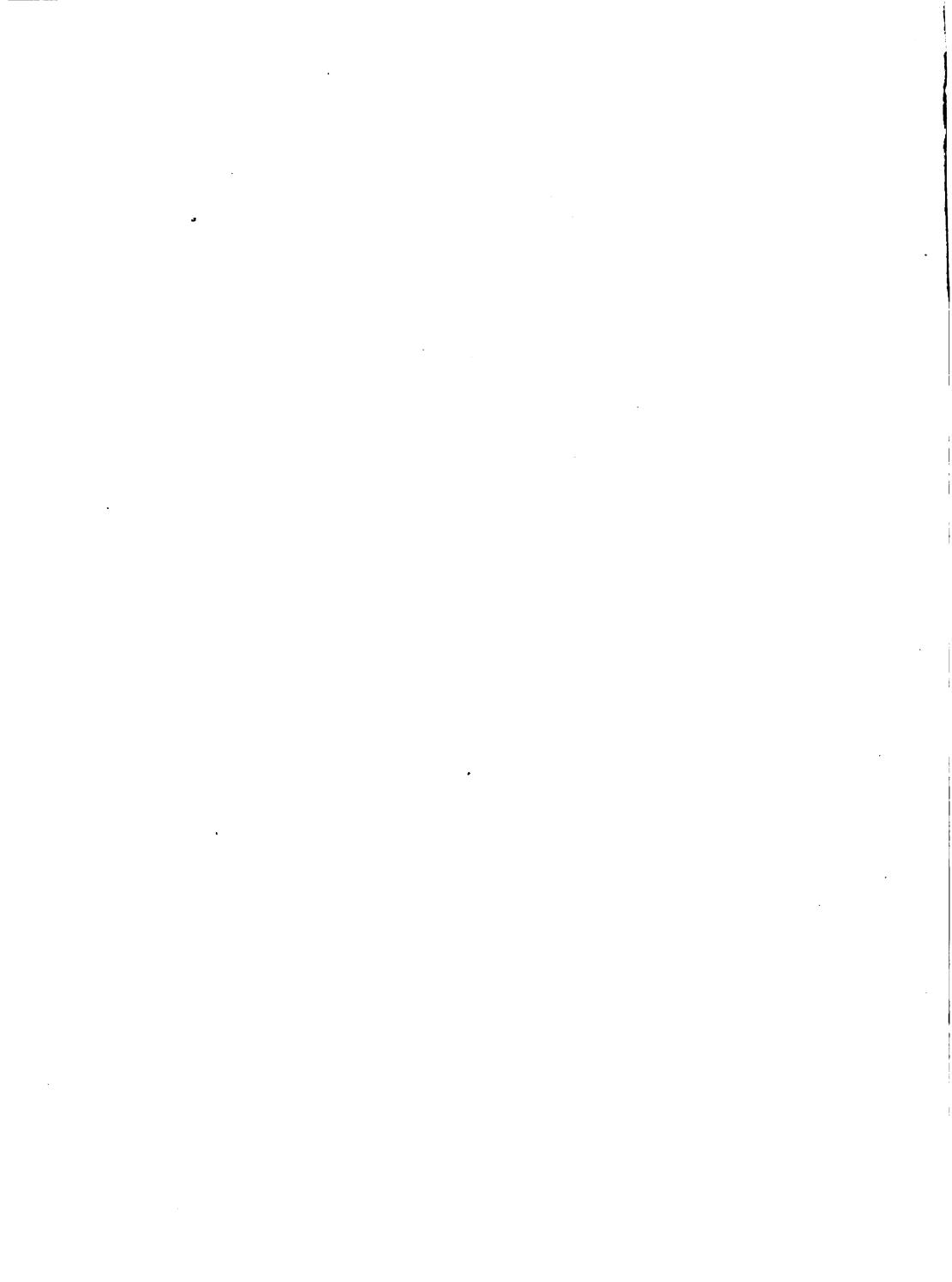
The night after Watch's burial there was a gay company of young people in the house. Suddenly they were startled by shouts and pistol shots outside. Every one started, and the gentlemen went to ascertain the cause of all the excitement. A man had been caught, who was probably a burglar. He was taken, of course, and equally of course, only the charge of vagrancy could be preferred against him, for when first seen by some of the neighbors, he was standing peering into the windows. There was tow in his pockets, and there was tow around the house. He probably had killed the dog, intending to fire the house, knowing that there would be a chance for plunder; but,—“not proven.”

Next morning the negroes came from their cabins over the creek, Monon last of all.

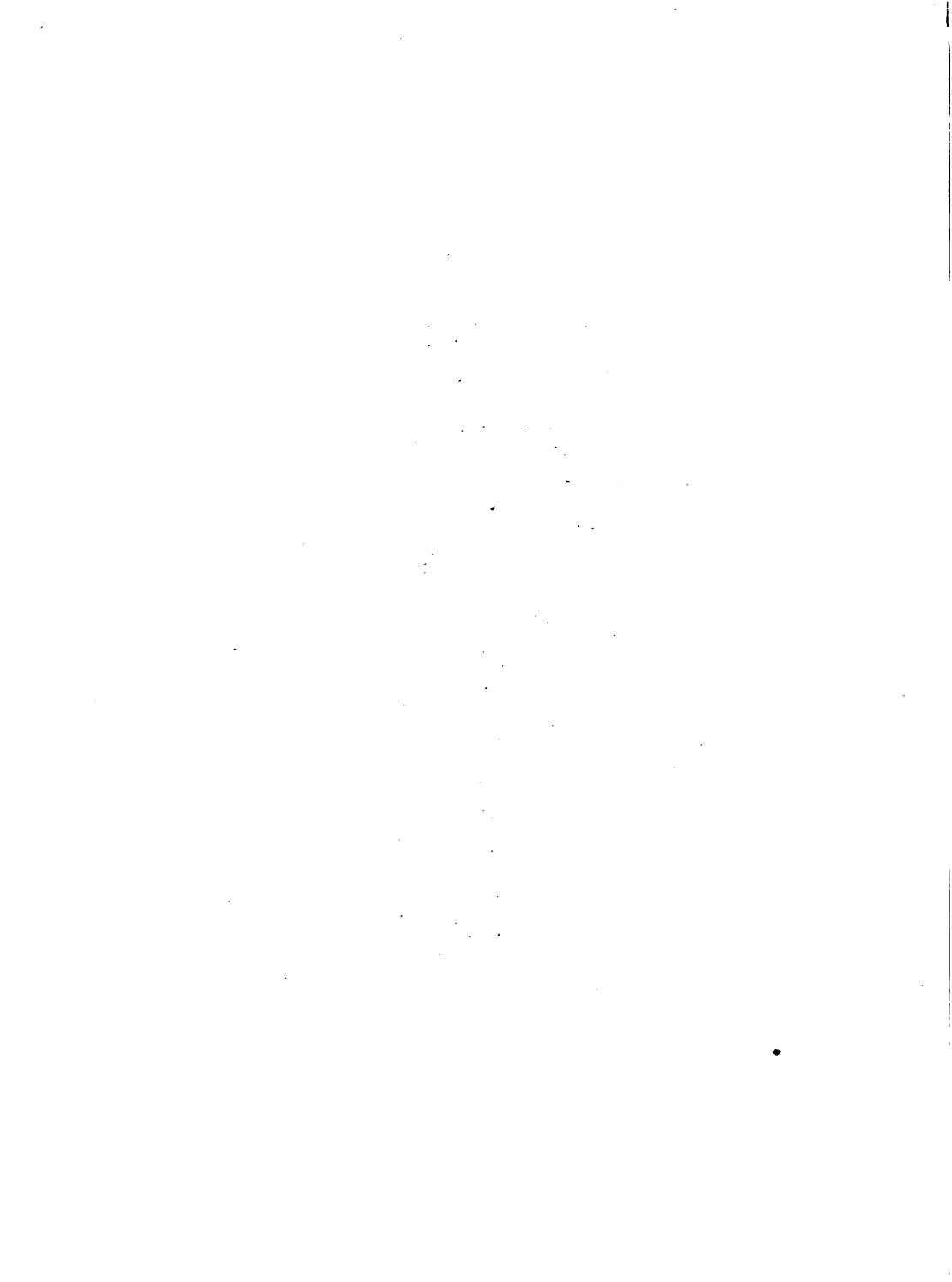
“Monon,” said his master, “you are a nice man to leave the family, and not come near when they are in such trouble.”

Monon slouched over against the wall of the house, and stood there eyeing his master.

“I’m shuah, sah, you knows all about mah reasons. I hearn’ de trouble las’ night; I hearn’ de bullets a whis’lin’, an’ a flyin’ froo de air, an’ I come tuh de aidge ob de creek an’ says I, ‘Monon, Monon,’ says I, ‘de fambly dey sho’ley is in trouble, but it won’ be bes’ fooh ev’y one tuh get kill’ or woun’ed; so Monon you jess go home an’ go tuh bed, an’ den go ovah in de mawnin’ when de warfare’s ovah, sah. Jess wait till de warfare’s ovah.’ ”



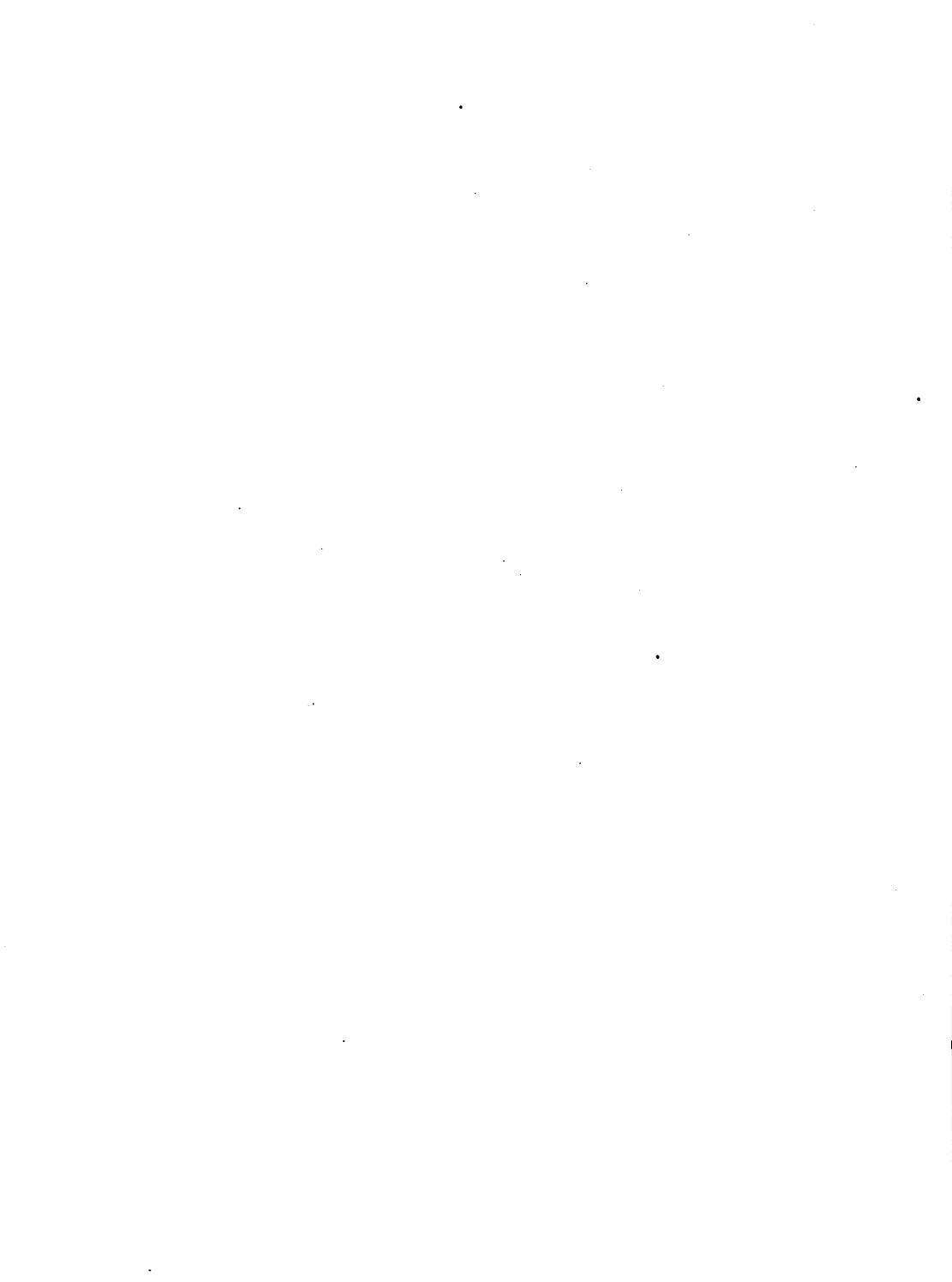
The Day Before Yesterday





RANDOLPH.

(35)



THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY.



HE minister was a new arrival in the town, and was taking count of all those who were to be his helpers in the work he was to do.

Among them was the sexton of the church. He was old, and had seen ministers come and go—bishops too—and yet he stayed on until he was an integral part of the church, and no one thought of St. John's without him.

And now Randolph was making his bow to the new minister, and saying to himself,—“Dis heah is shuah de right sort foh St. John's. He looks like he got sense, an' 'ligion, an' style. Folks don' of'en git dat com-be-nation; in gin'ally if you git style (dat is, stylish nuff to do) you don' git much 'ligion; an' mos'ly de ve'y 'ligious ones looks kin' o' down at de heels.”

And while Randolph eyes the minister, we may look at Randolph. He is tall and slim, with snow-white hair, and the blackest of skins. Dignified, gentle-mannered and slow of speech; his garments spotless, and his linen white; Randolph himself looks as though he were used to the company of gentlemen.

“Yas sah! Yas sah! youah ordahs is what I wants, sah! Chu’ch is in gin’al on Sunday mohnins, an’ eve-nin’s, an’ funerals, an’ weddin’s. No, sah! de ladies dey don’ meet none; leastways dey don’ meet heah. No, sah! dey ain’t no clubs—dis heah is jess a chu’ch foh de fust famblies.”

Randolph’s instinct told him that the new minister belonged with the first families, but he did not know that the new minister believed that “birth conveys no merit, but much duty to its inheritor.” If he had known that, he might have resigned his work then and there.

“Yas, sah! Yas sah! dis heah is a fine ole town, shuah nuff. We don’ has no new-fangled notions; we

don' has no ways ob yesterday; we is folks f'um de day befoah yesterday, we is,—de day befoah yesterday, sah!" And the old man quietly chuckled to himself.

And so the minister named his new abiding place "The Day before Yesterday;" and that name will do for us to call it by, although it would not enable one to find the quaint old town on the map.

"Day before Yesterday" is in one of the greatest states of the Union, and while the Virginia cavalier has given it grace and charm, it is not in Virginia, and while New England has lent it intellectual power, it is not in New England.

Shut in by the mountains and hills, it is one of the fairest spots in America. The valleys beyond it "stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing." Its sun-crowned mountain-tops throw long violet shadows in the springtime over dogwood and red-bud trees, the spirea and the Cherokee rose; its myriad orchards are rose-and-white with bloom; the red-bird never for-

sakes it, even in winter; and in summer the meadow lark's violin-note voices its beauty.

Small wonder then that "The Day before Yesterday," should have caught the eye and won the love of men, two hundred years agone, so that they planted homes there in which their descendants live today.

The town is built about a square, on one side of which stands a beautiful court-house. On one day each year the court-house is deserted—the day the quail season opens. Then judge and jury, lawyers and clients, adjourn to the fields for their annual hunt. North and south run the long avenues, beautifully shaded with giant elms and bordered by attractive old houses.

No one hurries on the streets. "Time was made for slaves," and they are a free people here. The women are so pretty; they take time to share their lives, as they share their flowers, with other people—and they make calls in the morning.

Fortunately, Randolph's estimate of the new min-

ister was the right one, and although he still serves the people—St. John's is no longer “jess a chu'ch foh de fust famblies.” They still go there, it is true; but the love that was in their hearts, has found expression in the larger ideals that mark their church's work to-day. The church has come to be known as “The church that takes care of the poor.” Its white-robed choir, and its boys' clubs, its St. Andrews' Brotherhood and its Girls' Friendly Society, are all doing their share in its work.

The minister “had sense.” He knew that the gentle-folk had a right to be considered; he upset no traditions, but in the spirit of his Master he grafted onto the Tree of Life, that he found there, the fair fruitage of a new day.

And Randolph? Well he never quite knew how it all happened, but after the minister had been there about three years, and daily Lenten services had taken the place of the old custom—a service on Wednesday nights—Randolph, who was dusting the church, was

heard to remark,—“I cla’r to goodness, I does; I wish dis heah long meetin’ dey call Lint ‘ud bus’ up.”

Later when the first families had been added to by many newcomers, he said:

“I don’ know what’s gittin’ dis heah place; Ize jess woh tuh a frazzle wid work; St. John hisse’f nevalh ’tended tuh has no such goin’s on,—Clubs an’ dese heah Frien’lys, an’ people wid all kin’s ob ’ligion, an’ no ’ligion ’t all, a-comin’ heah an’ sittin’ in ouah bes’ pews. Foah in a pew’s too many, any how, an’ de people in de back seat can’t no ways see de preacher now.”

When the call “to arms” came for the last war, and the bells rang out at night summoning the soldiers to the armory, St. John’s bell was one of the first to sound. How one’s heart beat, and the tears came, as one heard the young feet hurrying along the pavements, and knew of the eager lads who were responding to that call. There were sober faces next day, when the regiment marched away, and every soldier raised his hat as he passed St. John’s, for there hung

the Stars and Stripes where Randolph had put them in the early dawn.

On that memorable day when the news flashed across the seas that the power of Spain was broken, and that her ships lay crushed and helpless off the coast near Santiago de Cuba, the bell of St. John's was silent. The minister sent for Randolph and bade him ring it, and ring it long and loud. As he went toward the church he was overheard muttering, and saying to himself, "I clar tuh goodness! If dey's any more ob dese heah vict'ries, Ize gwine tuh resign mah job. I mos' broke mah back, ringin' dat ole bell when Gin'l Lee surrender'."

Randolph was born in slavery, but he had loved his people. "Gin'l Tayloe, sah! wuz de fines' dat evah lived"—he would say. "Me an' him wuz jess ob an age. Can't recollec' livin' widout him. His motha she died when he wuz two yeahs old, an' mah mammy she's his mammy. I always gits what he done leff, only de beatin's—I gits dem fust.

“When we wuz young men, we used tuh have gret times, we used tuh go visitin’ tuh otha plantations an’ sometimes we went tuh de Springs.

“De Springs wuz ouah favorite place; an’ dey sho’ly wuz fine. Dey wuz owned by Mistah Bell’s fambly from New Orleans. De fust time mah young Mastah Tayloe an’ young Mastah Go’don goes tuh de Springs, wuz one July. We travels on horse-back; de young gen’lemen, an’ Abram, Mastah Go’don’s boy, an’ me. By an’ by we comes ’bout ten miles f’um de Springs, an’ it’s gittin’ late, an’ it’s dark early, in de mountains. We-all’s expectin’ to meet up wid Majah King’s fambly, at de White tavern; an’ de young gen’lemen dey dressed deyselves extry fine at de las’ place. Dey been lots ob rains, an’ de creeks wuz high, an’ we had tuh ford one creek dat like tuh swamped us all, an’ it wuz nigh dark; so you coulden’ tell a black man f’um a white man.

“De young gen’lemen dey wuz both wearin’ lavender trousahs, an’ mah young mastah he got off his horse,

an' he say, "Go'don, I'm goin' to take off mah trousahs befo' I fords dis heah nex' creek." Mastah Go'don he say he do de same, an' dey done so.

"We-all mounts an' rides fo'ard—dey has dey knees high up,—an' pretty soon we hear dat creek. De horses steps in dat gingerly, an'—it aint even reached a foot high.

"Well, we done laugh consid'able, but Marse Tayloe he feel all right nex' day aftah he git his juleps, an' seen Miss Betty King.

"When we reaches de Springs, real times begins foh shuah. De horses prances in froo de big gates an' up de circ'lar drives, an' we-all follows Majah King's cahige. De gret big hotel stan's dere in de mohnin sun—jess as pink as a rose—an' de gret pillahs is so white dat dey makes you wink you eyes.

"De galleries has de Nolands, an' de Lucketts, de Carters, de Creels, an' de Hairstons, an' all de quality folks on it, an' dey comes a troopin out tuh see ouah party. Dere wuz a row ob black boys tuh take de

things, an' ten' ouah horses. An' de cahiges wuz taken tuh de quartahs.

"You neval see a place like dat no moah. De bricks wuz made on de groun's, an' de buildin's wuz put up by hundreds ob slaves. De bes' in de South come heah ev'y summah, drivin' miles an' miles, an' dey wuz room fuh ev'y one in de big house, or in Georgia row, which is de cottages.

"Come evenin' I fixes Marse Tayloe—an' he looks handsome, shuah! De dinin' room is big nuf foh a thousan' people, an' Marse Tayloe an' Marse Go'don dey has a table neah Majah King's, an' de meals dey gets——u-umph!

"Aftah suppah de moon comes up, an' de ban' plays in de big ballroom. Dat wuz a sight, shuah! De musicianers is all black men, an' dey sits in de gallery, an' de gen'lemen dances wid de young ladies, an' pays dey co't tuh de ladies as don' care foh dancin..

Nex' mohnin' I 'tends Marse Tayloe tuh de pool, foh tuh swim. Dat pool's in a brick house, open at de top.

Dey is a high wall in de middle; an' on one side is de ladies' pool, an' de otha side is de men's. Dey all likes tuh swim in dat green watah, an when Marse Tayloe comes out, he says he feels like he's five yeahs youngah.

"When we comes out, dere in front ob de big house is all de little tables, an' ev'y one sittin', an' drinkin' dey juleps. You ain't nevalh seen a real julep sah! if you ain't seen de ones dat Moses makes. When he mixes it he looks dat solemn, you thinks he's makin' de worl', an' when you drink it you thinks you owns de worl'—leastways you ain't got no quarrel wid anyone.

"Mint juleps! Don' ask me no moah 'bout dem sah. I kin see de fross on de glass yit; I kin smell dat mint—I kin see dem houn's lyin' in de sun—no sah! no sah! dem days is gone.

"'Bout three yeahs ago, Marse Tayloe an' me we done went back. De Bell fambly is still ownin' de Springs, an' Marse Tayloe he done say he got tuh see it once moah. We goes on de cars dis time, an' git cindahs in ouah eyes, an' we go so fas' you can't see

nuffin 't all; an' by an' by we come tuh de station where de coach meets us. It's one ob de same ole coaches, an' Marse Tayloe an' me clim' up on top an' take ouah seats, an' de driver blows his hohn, an' we started. But dey ain't no boys a ridin' alongside, an' dey ain't no Nolands, or Carters on de road. When we comes tuh de ole White tavern, where we met Miss Betty King, de Gin'l he looks de otha way. De galleries is fallin' down an' poah white trash lives dere.

"When we gits tuh de Springs, Mistah Bell he comes tuh meet us, an' he wuz dat rejoicin'. Marse Tayloe he say, 'Kin he have his ole quartahs?'—an' Mistah Bell he say,—'Suttinly; he kin have any place he wants'; an' a black boy comes wid a big box o' brass keys, an' we goes tuh de room. Mistah Bell he search froo de box, an' try de keys till he fin' one dat opens de doah, an' Marse Tayloe he goes in. De curtains is de same, an' de bed is de same. Dey's a fiah laid in de fiah place, an' de ole green rug is on de floah.

"Marse Tayloe he say—'Come back in an ouah, Randolph,' an' he shet de doah.

“Dat night, when I puts out his candle, he says:—
‘Randolph, we takes de stage back tomorrow. I can’t
stan’ it heah:—de place is full ob ghostses.’

“De nex’ night we is waiting at de station foh ouah
train:—Marse Tayloe says he gwine tuh Norfolk tuh
see de crêpe myrtle in bloom:—an’ ‘long come a big
train. De conductah hops off, an’ one ob dem potahs he
sets out his little step, an’ don’ no one git on. De con-
ductah he hollahs out—‘Whar’s youah passengers?’ an’
de agint, who is a membah ob an ole fambly, he comes
out an’ say ‘dey ain’t no passengers foh dat train.’
‘What in de debbil you flag dis heah train foh?’ says
de conductah. ‘I ain’t flag dis train,’ says de agint,
‘dat flag, sah, is hung out foh de nex’ train.’

“Marse Tayloe an’ me ain’t been back no moah, an’
we tryin’ tuh forgit dat time. It’s dis heah way:—
Ef you stays in de place, you don’ notice de diffunce,
but when de yeahs is long between times, you’d bet-
tah not go back.”

Now if there is one thing above another that the old

time negro adores it is “de quality,” as he designates people of birth and breeding. More often than not, he has been reared by gentlefolk, and much that is essential to real culture he has learned both by precept and example. He is a discerning person, and he had rather serve “de quality” in poverty, than the newly rich.

General Tayloe once sent Randolph to dig some sod on a common, opposite the house of one of “Day before Yesterday’s” prosperous new men. While he was digging, the owner of the house came out and expostulated with him. Randolph’s cart was about filled, and he drove quietly away, making no answer.

In an hour he was back again, digging more sod. Again the owner of the house expostulated—this time pretty vigorously—and Randolph said:

“Dis heah sod, sah, dis heah sod’s foh Gin’l Tayloe.”

“General Tayloe!” answered the man—“General

Tayloe! Well, who's General Tayloe, anyhow? Ain't he made of dirt, same as the rest of us?"

"Well, yes sah! he is, I reckon—but you know dey's odds in dirt, sah! odds in dirt."

One day as the minister was going out to begin a round of parish calls, he stopped to ask Randolph where the Stuart family lived.

"It's on de aidge ob town, sah; an' you can't mistake de place. You drives out de pike till you comes tuh a big red gate in a stone wall. When you goes in you can see de fambly buryin' groun', an' de view f'um de hill is like de kingdoms ob de yearth. Dey ain't many ob dat fambly leff now, sah! jess six—an' Miss Ann, she's queah. She don' care nothin' much 'bout *fambly*; she says she'd ruther be common folks goin' up, dan a 'ristocrat goin' to seed."

There came a day when the mortal body of one of the old citizens of "Day before Yesterday" was laid to rest on the "Hill" above the town. The "Hill" is

in very truth, God's acre,— beautifully cared for and kept, as the resting place of the dead should be. Randolph had carried his burden of flowers to the new made grave, and on his way home stopped at the rectory for his orders for the next day's duties.

"We gwine tuh miss dat Marse John, sah! Dey ain't neval been many like him. Dey ain't har'ly any leff. He's de kin' ob a gen'leman dat had a real lady foh his motha, an' he wuz a pillah in de church. Now, mostly dese heah 's men dats jess made derselves, dey ain't no pillahs in de church. Dey don' go tuh de co'ts ob de Lord's house 't all, dey is jess buttresses sah! an' supports it f'um de outside.

At one time "Day before Yesterday" decided to have a Rummage Sale and apply the proceeds to its little City Hospital. A large store room was rented, and the town thoroughly canvassed for "rummage." Pretty girls and prettier matrons were the saleswomen, and the relic hunter who went early was in luck, for he found some fine old brasses and many another

treasure. Those who went later, found that the oldest things there were card-board mottoes of "God Bless our Home," and a lot of impossible, black walnut, furniture.

Now, the minister had given some clothes and old hats and shoes for the sale, and Randolph had packed them in a basket to carry to the store room. He discovered in the lot a long since discarded dress suit, of ancient cut.

"Dey ain't no use takin' dis heah tuh de sale, sah! you lemme sell it tuh a waitah, an' gimme half de money."

"All right," said the minister, "you may do that, and we will give the other half to the building fund for St. Augustine's (the mission for the colored people).

A year went by and no funds were brought to the minister. Randolph explaining that "De waitahs is all supplied jess now, sah!" and at the end of the second year his story was the same. Three years, and then Randolph offers to buy the suit himself, and when the

minister gave it to him he said, "Thank you sah! thank you. Now Lucy she'll be dat happy! You see, sah, Ize been married twice. It's natch'erl foh me tuh go fust an' give Lucy anothah chance. She done plan de fines' funeral foh me. She jess set huh heart on seein' me laid out in dat suit, an' whar de trousahs is thin she done reseated dem. She says, "'t aint gwine tuh show no-how in a coffin, an' she say she knows you don' want 'em back now 'cause dey's done been had moff-balls in dem."

May the day be far distant before Lucy has "another chance"—for the conditions that molded men like Randolph are gone, and the new day has not yet dawned when the man in life's lowly station considers it a mark of self-respect to be "mannerly."

After Freedom Came





"I COOKS HOLLIS SOME EXTRY PONES."

(57)

AFTER FREEDOM CAME.

Tis the time of new life; the time when somewhere in the wood the mocking bird sings his “dropping song”—his ecstasy of love—and to be alive is joy; to be young and strong, is bliss unspeakable.

Just close your eyes for a moment. It is nearly dark—the evening time—the children have been playing down in the orchard, and are coming slowly home; the old Virginia rail-fence is overgrown with creepers, trumpet-vine and ivy; some sleepy birds are twittering; the west is touched with rosy shadows; the orchard is pink with bloom, and up through the deepening twilight come the children, sleepy, happy little children, to be petted, and by and by tucked in their white beds by Georgie.

Her labor of love done, Georgie comes back to the gallery to sit alone, her face hidden in the shadow of

the night, as her life had been in the shadow of slavery.

She is old now, and the color of time-stained and much polished mahogany. For twenty years she has served my people, and yet I never knew her story until that evening when I came out on the gallery to sit and watch the moon come up, and Georgie sang old plantation lullabys to me, as she had done when I was a little child.

"How old are you Georgie?" I queried, wondering at the gentle way in which time had treated her, "how old are you?"

"I can't jess rightly remembah what to assert 'bout dat, honey. You-all knows I wuz bohn in Frankfort, Kentucky, an' I done live with mah ole Mastah an' Miss, an' dey-all's chillun in a gret big house, an' dere wuz a big garden an' a high stone wall roun' it. I helped care fooh de chilluns, an' I wuz a right smaht slip ob a girl when de soldiers went tuh de Mexican wah.

"De ban' it would play an' de soldiers dey would

march froo dose Frankfort streets an' den Georgie didnen' min' no chilluns. Me an' young Marse Willie we jess slip outen de big iron gate: ole Miss ain't gwine tuh say nothin' tuh we-all; we goes tuh de square an' climbs on de big wall, dat's wide nuff on top foh tuh drive a team ob horses roun' an' dere we sits an' watches dem soldiers an' hears de ban's play.

"Den nex' thing I knows, mah young Miss Belle, she done marries Eldah Morgan's son, an' dey moves off tuh Missouri, like heaps ob young Kentucky folks done in dose days, an' I wuz one ob de weddin' presents dat huh fatha done give tuh huh.

"Miss Belle's husband wuz a preacher, but he wan't none ob youah poah kind. His fatha give him a fine plantation neah Independence, an' plenty slaves foh tuh work it, an' Miss Belle she done manage de whole plantation when he wuz off tuh de Quarterlies.

"Eldah Morgan wuz one ob de leadahs in dose parts, an' dey-all's house wuz gret, foh bein' full ob company.

"I kin jess shet mah eyes now an' see dat gret big

white house, an' galleries 'cross de back, an' big pillahs in de front. Dat house didn' have ary little no-count rooms in it. No, mam, dey wuz big high ceilin's an' gret big rooms. De parloh wuz lovely in de early summah mohnins; we used to shet doun de blin's (Venity blin's, Miss Belle done called dem) an' put big bunches o' sparrowgrass tops in de fiah place, an' it wuz dat cool an' lovely it was fitten foh tuh res' an angel in.

"Miss Belle she wuz a big woman with de blackes' hair an' de blackes' eyes, an' she stan so straight no darkey evah wait foh huh tuh give ordahs de secon' time. She always woah white dresses in de summah time, an' she jess remin' me ob a picture, though I don' jess rightly remembah whar I seen de picture."

"Well, evenin's we-all culluds used tuh go tuh de neighborin' plantations. We got permission, but if we wuz out aftah ouahs an' wuz caught, dey wuzent one ob us dat 'scaped a beatin'. Lan' o' goodness! don't I wish dem days wuz back. Fiddlin'; young

feet an' ole feet dancin', singin', an' ole Marse givin' we-all ouah vittles.

"Me and Hollis wuz de happies' niggahs in de country, dem days. Hollis wuz owned on de McCoy plantation, de nex' place tuh ouahs, an' when Miss Belle she done fin' out dat de reason dat I ain't put no salt in de cohn bread is 'cause I wuz thinkin' ob Hollis, she makes up her min' dat she got tuh own him too. She say she can't spar' me nohow, an' Mistah McCoy he say he ain't gwine tuh sell Hollis, but he'd trade him fuh ouah team ob big white mules.

"When I hearn dat, I wuz plum' 'stracted, for Eldah Morgan set moah stoah by dem mules dan any otha ob his teams, an' Miss Belle she wuzent shuah, but she diden' urge Marse Morgan. She jess put on huh pretties' dress, wid dem big flowin' sleeves, an' de gret big collah dat showed huh white throat, an' she says tuh me, 'Georgie don' forgit de salt tonight.'

"I jes woah myself tuh a frazzle, 'bout dat suppah. Cooked Marse Morgan's hominy so it looked like gret

big, white snow-flakes, an' fried de chicken—umph!

“Marse Morgan he wuz powerful set, if he wuz 'lowed tuh say; so Miss Belle she use tuh talk dat sweet dat he'd think he wuz as smaht as Solomon, an' den Miss Belle she'd git what she wanted, an' he'd nevah know de diff'uence.

“Me an' Hollis would agreed bettalì if I done dat, but lan'! niggahs ain't got de patience, an' 'sides, when I had mah own way I wanted Hollis tuh know it. Yes, I married Hollis. Miss Belle she got Marse Morgan tuh trade dem mules foh him, an' his ole Marse an' Miss come tuh de weddin' at ouah place. Miss Belle, she give me a new dress an' a white apron, an' Hollis' mastah give him some new clothes foh tuh weah, an' we's married in de big parloh. All de niggahs had a holiday dat evenin' an' down in de quartahs dey wuz a dance an' a possum suppah.

“I had tuh cook de white folks suppah, an' all de gen'lemen give me money an' tobacco. De kitchen wuz 'way off f'um de big house, but when de suppah wuz

ready, a row ob pickanninies use tuh stan' an' pass de dishes 'long quick, an' den John pass dem roun' de table, while Abram wave de peacock brush tuh keep off de flies.

"Well! my chilluns dey wuz growin' up side by side with Miss Belle's chillun, when freedom come. Freedom jess set Hollis plum crazy. He didn' wait foh nothin' but jess lit out tuh see how it feels—when he can go an' no one can call him back.

"Dat freedom ain't no glory tuh me, when de raidahs come along an' buhn ouah ole home an' kill ole Marse foh 'fendin ob his own. Both sides dey jess sent all kinds ob poah white trash tuh de bordah country, an' I like tuh eat mah heart out when ole Marse come from Frankfort, tuh see Miss Belle, an' found huh livin' in de ca'hige house.

"Ole Marse he tried to 'suade Miss Belle tuh go 'long home with him, but lan' no! she say she gwine tuh stay whar Elder Morgan fix huh home, an' thar she staid.

"Hollis he done move off tuh Quindaro an' by an' by he gits a little patch ob foah acres, an' me an' de chilluns go tuh live with him.

"Come along yeahs an' yeahs, an' I ain't evah seen mah own white folks, an' pears like I jess git a misery in mah bres' wantin' mah Miss Belle, an' so I jess up an' tells Hollis, Ize gwine out tuh Independence an' hunt up mah white people.

"I cooks Hollis some extry pones an' beats all de chilluns, to make 'em behave while Ize away, an' den me an' Mandy an' de baby, we started off. I didn' put much in mah basket, foh I 'lowed Miss Belle might have somethin' tuh give we-all when we starts home. We taken de train tuh Independence, an' when we comes dere we starts out foh tuh walk. Well! de place is changed so I can't tell nothin' 'bout whar Ize gwine. I wuz jess shuah de conductah made a mistake, an' put me off at de wrong place, an' so I asks someone if dis heah place is Independence. Dey says: 'Yes, shuah it is,' an' den dey told me dat de McCoy's

place wuz in de town now, an' I fin's it after a while. My young Marse Willie—he's growed up an' married now—an' Miss Belle she's livin' with him. I come roun' de house an' dey-alls sittin' on de gallery, an' one ob de chilluns calls out, 'Howdy! aunty, what you want?' Dey's all dere; Miss Belle an' all, an' not one ob dem knows me. I jess stood a lookin' an' pretty soon mah young Marse Willie jumps up an' shouts out, 'Its Georgie! Its mah ole mammy, shuah.'

"Miss Belle she taken me into de kitchen an' gives me an' de chilluns ouah suppah. De chilluns dey didn't know no bettah, an' jess sat up eatin' like white folks, but I wuz dat flustered eatin' off Miss Belle's chiny plates, an' Miss Belle a waitin' on me, dat a gret big lump come up in mah throat.

"Sun-down come 'long, an' I goes up staihs with the chilluns tuh bed. I like tuh died. Miss Belle she said: 'Georgie—we gwine tuh let you sleep in dis heah wing room. We-all don' use it no moah, but we keep some ob de ole home things heah.' Sure nuff, dar's de gret

big bed dat come f'um Frankfort, de wides' one (wide nuff foah six chilluns), ovah de head wuz de big canopy wid de red linin' an' on dat bed wuz fethas an' pillahs tuh make you smotha. Ovah de stan' wuz de gret big gilt glass, Miss Belle's fatha give huh, an' in de room wuz a few moah things, an' in de co'nah some haih trunks.

"When Miss Belle goes out, I jess put mah ole shawl on de floah, an' put a pillah on dat, an' dar I lays de chilluns. 'Gret lan!' sez I, 'I can't sleep in dat bed. Miss Belle's gran'motha'd come back heah an' huh hant 'u'd jess war me out. No. Georgie, you'd look like a soot spot on a snow bank, up dar'; an' so I sleeps on de floah.

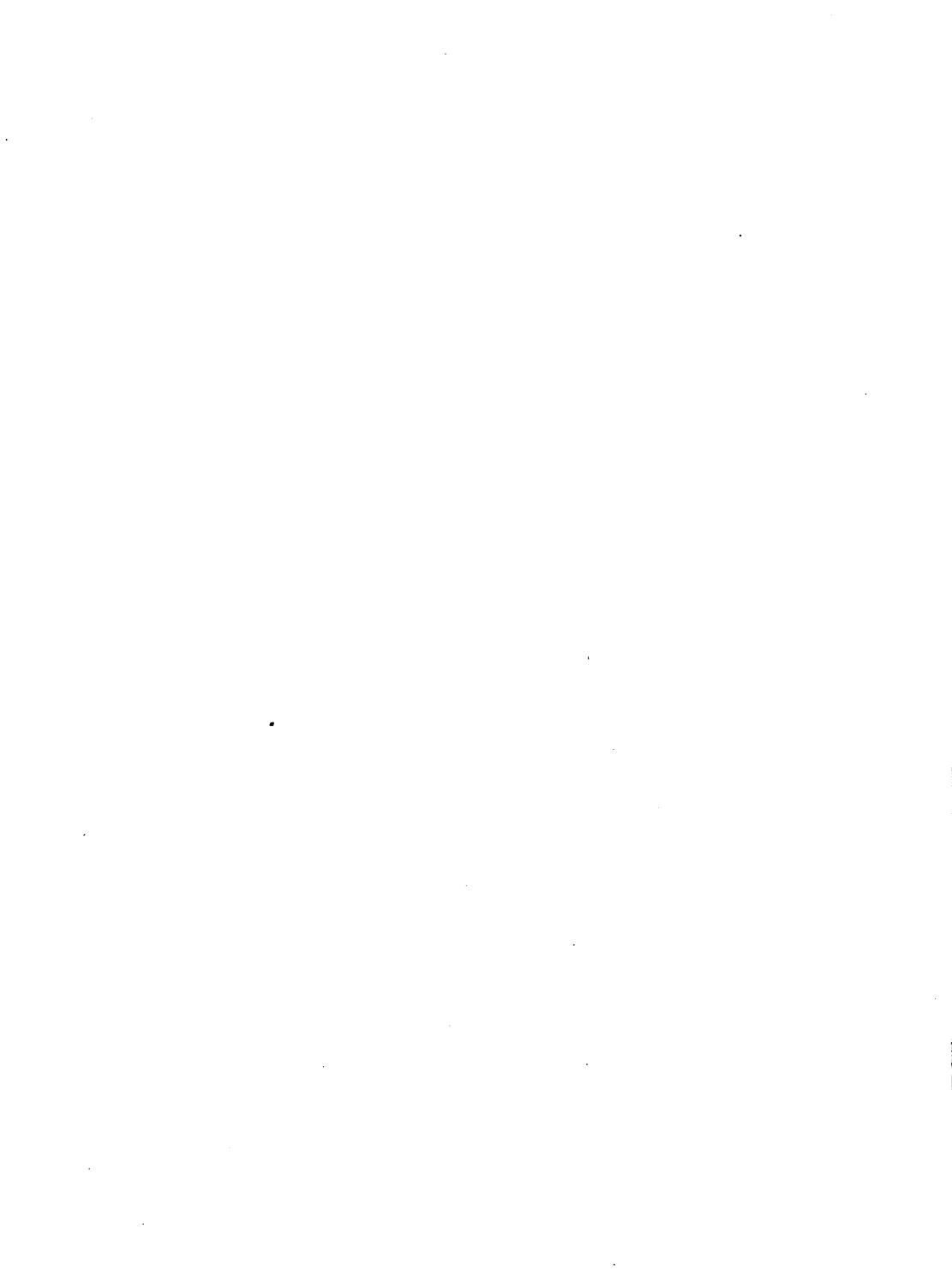
"In de mornin' I made waffles foah breakfus, an' den I tells Miss Belle, Ize gwine home. She an' Marse Willie said, 'Why Georgie you bettah stay a week.' Dey coulden' 'suade me. 'No,' sez I, 'no, Ize gwine home tuh Hollis.'

"I taken de five dollahs Marse Willie give me, an'

I goes home. Befo' dat I didn't think much ob freedom—workin' hard an' livin' poah—wuss dan any slave I evah seen—but when I gits home dat night, I sets down outside mah little cabin, an' I sez tuh Hollis:

“ ‘Hollis, freedom’s queah. White folks, if dey has niggahs, needs tuh live in de big houses, an’ de niggahs dey needs de quartahs.’ My Miss Belle, huli gran’chillun, dey is dat ordinary an’ impolite. Dey laces up dey own shoes, an’ dey waits on deyselves; an’ Marse Willie’s little boy he set right still in his char readin’ an’ nevah even *look* up when his gran’-motha come into de room.’ ”

Uncle Davie and the Telephone



UNCLE DAVIE AND THE TELEPHONE.

 NCLE DAVIE JOHNSON was quite sure that he got due credit for being the smartest old man in the town where he lived. Born and bred a slave, freedom came when he was past his prime, and he had never even learned his letters. He used to contrive in all sorts of pathetic ways, to impress the younger generation with his wisdom; on summer evenings he would sit on the steps in front of his little cabin, holding the paper in his hand; now and again polishing his spectacles and readjusting them to his old eyes, and pretending to read the news to his wife and the neighbors. She never was quite sure that Uncle Davie could not read.

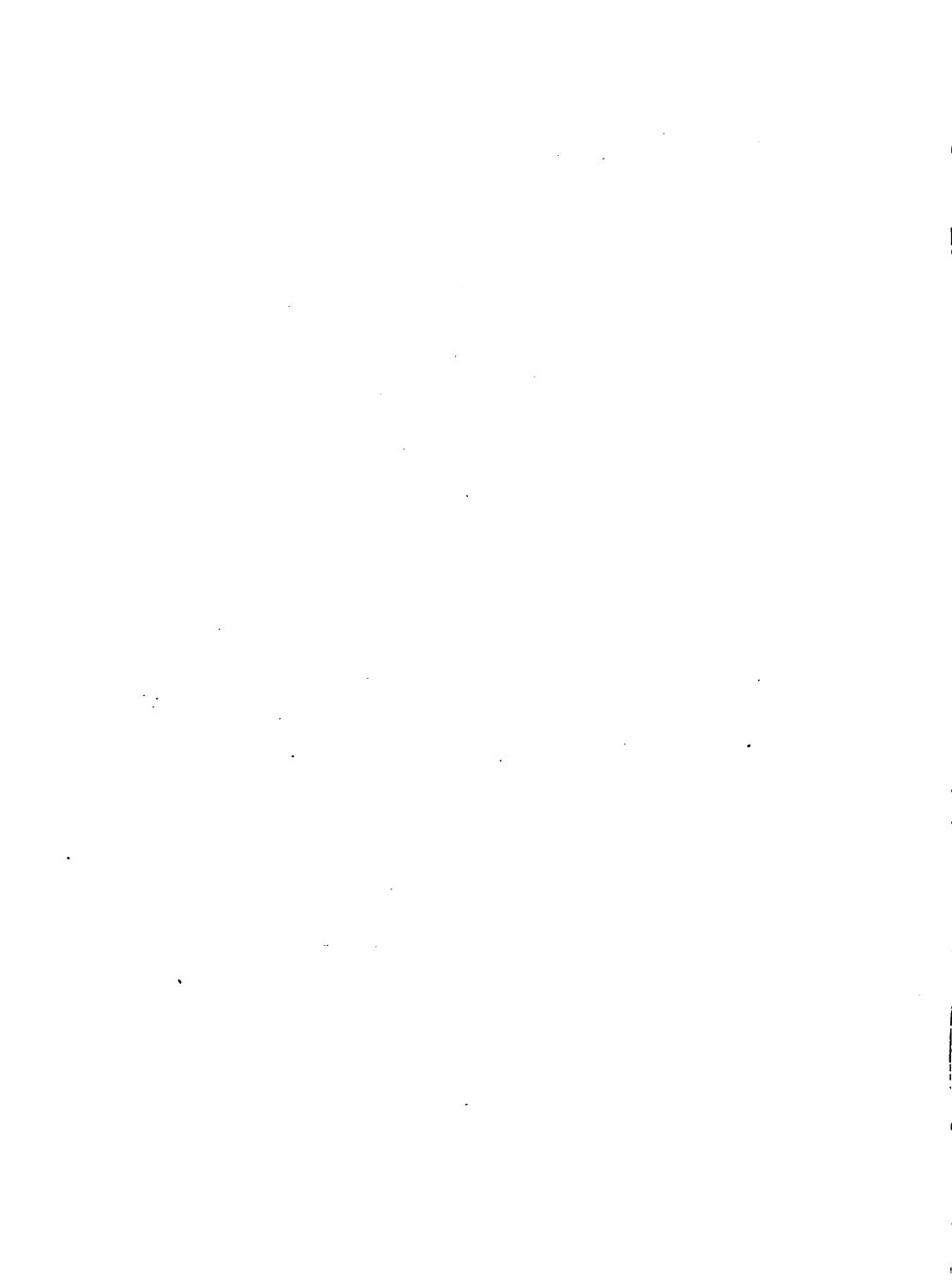
He always protested against being called an old man. "Why Ize young, ve'y young foh a hard workin' man,—an' dese heah modern fixin's, see how I understan's dem—tel'phones an' 'lectricities, and tel'graphies.

I studies a heap 'bout dose things an' I knows all 'bout dem."

Perhaps Uncle Davie did "study a heap 'bout dose things" for he was the porter in a large elevator, and he had only to press a little button to bring brilliant light into the place where darkness had been. Uncle Davie could remember the days when a bit of candle was a hoarded treasure, and the "wintergreen candles" the pride of the Christmas Tide.

One day Uncle Davie's employer heard the tinkle of the telephone bell in his outer office, and started to answer its call, when he heard a voice; looking into the room he saw Uncle Davie, busily engaged in sweeping. Uncle Davie stopped still in the middle of the floor, and shook his fist at the instrument, saying: "Jingy, jingy; stop dat ringin', aint I done tol' you—stop dat ringin'—dey's nobody heah but de potah, nobody heah but de potah."

Polly





POLLY SOFTENED, AND LEANED TOWARD US.

(77)



POLLY.



OME years ago there was a great exodus of Tennessee negroes to the West. Great boat-loads of them came up the Mississippi river to St. Louis, and thousands of them drifted on to Kansas City, coming by boat and by rail, until the city was almost besieged, and found it a difficult matter to take care of them. There were tents erected on the levee and along the river banks; for many weeks the citizens clothed and fed the refugees, and some of them were sent farther west.

My father took me to see the wonderful sight, and to hear the new voices speak; for the negro of the South has a different accent from the negro of Missouri. The South has lent to the Southwest a wonderfully soft and attractive accent, but it is more like the accent of the Englishman than that of a Southerner, and decidedly different.

We were at this time missing an old family servant, who after years of service, had died. One day a ring at the door bell of our side entrance, heralded the arrival of a diminutive yellow woman, clad in a very clean, much starched gown of green-and-white gingham. She wanted work. She had traveled far enough, she said, for she had come with the exodus.

Polly staid and proved herself to be an excellent cook. She had never married, and in all my experience she is the only negress I have known who placed "No 'pendence on men folks," and thought them an "ornery lot."

The gardener was a lazy man, and entirely willing that his wife should supplement his earnings by doing laundry work. He used to jeer at Polly for never having married, and one day when she had reached the limit of her patience she said to him:

"Now, you go long 'bout your business William. I kin marry if I wants tuh; its a mighty queah cullud woman dat can't get an' ole niggah man foh tuh wash foh!"

When the long summer evenings came, Polly would sit out in the grape-arbor smoking her pipe, reflecting on the journey she had taken, and the friends that she had left.

She was always sure of an audience of two small, and much interested little girls, if it was her mood to tell stories; but it was long before we could coax from her any bit of her own history.

"I ain't no fiel' han'. I done bin raised by ladies. I nevah leave while mah Miss May she's livin', but she's daid. Dey's all daid, and Ize boun' tuh trabble. I ain't nevah gwine tuh want foh nothin', for I has money, an' I kin wuk."

Polly looked so important, that my little sister and I immediately had visions of the sort of wealth that Aladdin's lamp commanded, and Polly seeing our rapt attention, softened and leaned toward us, the stiff folds of her gingham gown standing out about her, her little yellow head under its bandanna handkerchief, tipped to one side.

"I has money, chilluns; I has two hundred dollahs. Miss May done lef' it tuh me, an' young Marse William is keepin' it fooh me till I wants it."

Two hundred dollars, seemed the wealth of the Indies to Polly. It seemed a heap to the two little girls who were listening to her. There in the deepening twilight they sat, the odor of wild grapes, sweetest odor of springtime, wafted to them with every breeze; and one by one the stars came out while Polly talked of bonnie Miss May and young Marse William.

"I come wid de 'scursion, 'cause dat I didn' have tuh spen' mah fortune dat way. All along de folks dey feeds an' ministahs tuh us; when dey come on de boat an' dey says, 'Whar's you man?' I says, 'I has no man; Ize all alone in de worl,' an' dey treats me extry nice, thinkin' mah man is daid. De wimmen as has men dey doan get but jess half de pickin's, 'sides waitin' on de men. Wimmen dey is mos'ly fools. Shoo! you chilluns go into you bed, else you won'

get no beauty sleep, an' when you grows up, de men
dey won' like you."

One day father found in the stable an old tin pan
filled with rusty nails, and what was apparently vine-
gar. Floating in the liquid were three black beans.
Just as he was about to throw it out, Polly sprang
toward him from the open door.

"Don' sah! don' frow out mah tonic! Foh de
I,awd's sake don' frow out mah charm! I brung dem
beans f'um de Souf. Dey wuz mah mammy's beans,
she got dem f'um a Cunjah man. It wuk, shuah, if
you keeps it in de stable ob a coal-black horse, an' you
takes some ev'y mohnin'; den nothin' ain't gwine tuh
get you folh a yeah, sah."

Father left the pan, and told Polly she would be so
freckled, that she could not see her face, if she took
all that iron.

When Polly left us she had saved quite a little sum
of money, and she rented a cabin on one of the bluffs

above the depot. Here she lived thriftily enough, taking in washing and doing odd chores. One time in the winter she was missing from her cabin for several weeks, and we could find no trace of her. When she came to see us again, clean, and prim as ever, she placidly informed us that she "hadn't been no-whar, but tuh jail."

"Jail, Polly, jail! why, what do you mean?"

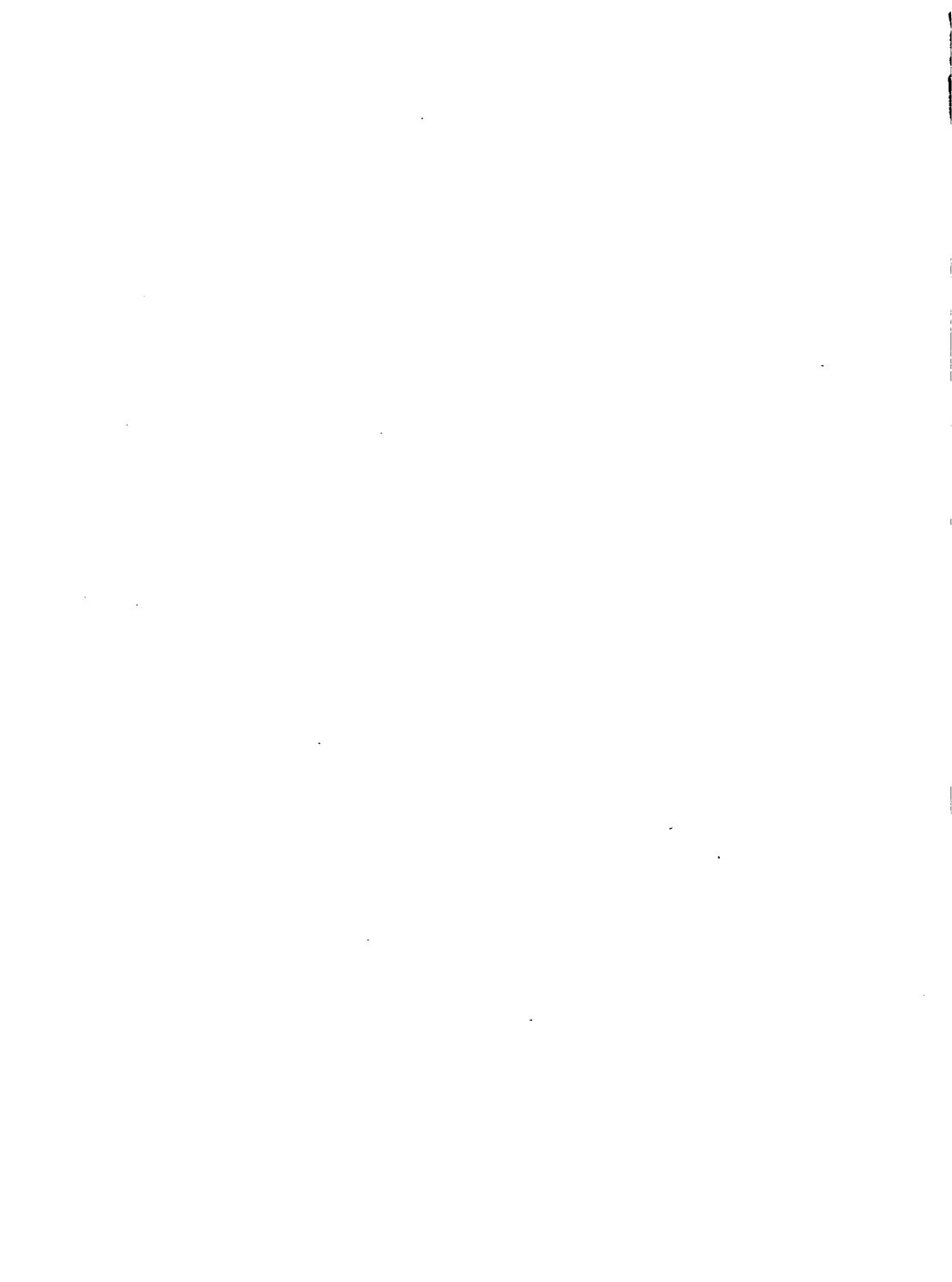
"Yes'm, jail," repeated Polly. "I took a little coal—dere ain't no earthly use a-buyin' coal when de railroads dey drops so much on de tracks. I picked up some, an' de p'liceman he say dey jess got tuh stop dis heah pickin' an' stealin', so I went tuh de jail an' cooks foh de prisoners, an' I got mah livin' an' I ain't touch mah fortune yet."

Cupid and Rose



ROSE.

(87)



CUPID AND ROSE.

IAM going to make one story of them, because they belonged together. He was tall and slim, straight as an Indian, and an old-time negro of a type that is almost gone. She was as tall, as old a type, and as old in years; husband and wife "without benefit of clergy," "for" as they expressed it, "huh ole man an' mah ole woman dey done bin sold off tuh de Souf, an' dey nevah come back; we-all can't live alone. We-all's frien's, an' so we jess married ouahselves. We nevah seen ouah own again; dey's prob'bly daid, an' we don' like 'vorces, so if dey comes back we kin jess git unmarried."

They never will come back, and these two old people, faithful, devoted, with the true spirit of marriage in their hearts, kept on their uncriticised way. They, too, are "daid" now, and long ere this, all that was in any real sense their own, is again theirs.

Cupid is a very strange name to bestow on any son of man, but since it was his real name, what else could I call him? Besides, the utter inappropriateness of the name was one of the things that made him interesting. Rose, well, there have been black Roses before, doubtless will be again.

Cupid was an excellent gardener, and one spring he wanted to plant watermelons on a sunny, uncultivated slope at the rear of the orchard. His master bought him some fine seeds and told him that he might have all of the melons that he raised, except those wanted for the family's use. So the seeds were planted, but the family got very few melons, except now and again one that Cupid would designate as a "runt" and then proceed to abuse "dat good foh nothin' hillside dat gimme so much trouble an' don' bar no fruit."

One night his master and mistress were out driving and came in quite late, just as the young moon was slipping behind a cloud. They turned in at the big stone gateway, and there in the shadow of the wall saw

a figure crouching down. The master took the carriage whip, and got out of the phaeton while the mistress drove on a few paces.

“Who is there?” No answer. “Who is there?” repeated he. “Come out instantly or I’ll surely use this carriage whip!” Up rose a tall black figure. Cupid!

“What is in that bag?”

“Nothin’, sah, nothin’. Dey ain’t nothin’ in dis heah bag.” The sides of the bag were bulging out, and Cupid still swore that there was nothing in it. Reluctantly he opened it and disclosed a lot of big, fine melons, which he was carrying off for his own delectation, and when he tried to “splain” he said “white folks, dey doan care foh melons like we-all, an’ dey oughten ter have de bigges’ ones.”

At one time Rose was very ill; at the point of death, it seemed, and Cupid was in sore distress. When he came for his day’s task his mistress said to him: “How is Rosie this morning?”

“She’s libbin’, ma’am. Las’ night we thought huh

time come shuah nuf. Rosie, she 's in de bed wid a pillah undah huh back, an' Elvine (her grand-daughter) wuz a-sleepin' on de floah. Der come an awful noise! bump! bumpty! bum! down de side ob de hill an' Elvine she jumps up an' she says: 'Grandmotha, de Lawd's comin' foah you shuah, dis time!' 'Well, if He is, He's makin' a mighty powerful noise 'bout it,' said Rosie, 'an' jess den a big rock roll down de hill an' bus' in de doah—bang! spang!—an' Rosie, she know dat ain't no messangeh foah huh."

Cupid was just his master's height, and, of course, came in for all of his master's cast-off clothing. He was very proud and happy over an old silk hat, and said to his master: "Dis heah hat suttinly makes me feel like a gen'leman, yes sah! it suttinly do; I got tuh get out mah dignity when I wars dis heah."

Still his happiness was not quite complete, for his master had not given him a Prince Albert coat, which he especially coveted. "I need dat, sah, I need dat to war tuh de Quarterly an' tuh de Conference. A preacher

he ain't half a preacher, widout de right kin ob clo'es.
Now you done gimme de neckties an' de hat, ain't you
gwine tuh gimme dat coat?"

Cupid liked to hear the news, and his master's daughter often read to him. At the time of Mr. Cleveland's first nomination to the presidency she was reading the political news to him. "Missie" and Cupid were the best of friends and many an argument they had over the questions of the day.

"Yes'm," said Cupid; "yes'm, Mistah Cleveland he jess all right. I dun knowed him when he wuz a Majah in de Southan ahmy."

"Cupid! he never was in the Southern army."

"Yes, honey, he wuz, he suttinly wuz."

"Well," said Missie, after some argument, "if an ignorant old man like you can vote, I would just like to know why an intelligent white woman can not."

"I knows de reason," said Cupid, straightening up his tall, spare figure. "I knows de reason. It am jess dis, Missie," and then with a twinkle in his eye he

said, "de reason am dis, dey ain't got de masculine qualifications—dey ain't got de masculine qualifications."

Like many of the old time negroes, he worked on the six working days of the week, and "preached" on Sundays. He could not read, yet he always preached with the Bible open before him. When asked why he had the Bible there and what he preached about, since he could not read, he said:

"I keeps de book befo' me, 'cause I know dat God's word is dere, an' I don' need tuh read ary tex' foh I kin always preach 'bout de Lawd Jesus."

Could any one do more than this, to help uplift humanity—"teach and preach 'bout de Lawd Jesus?"

When Cupid came to his last illness, he lay patiently suffering for many weeks. Finally he refused to take the nourishing food which his mistress took to him, and said that he was ready to go home.

"What's de use ob feedin' dis heah ole body, when mah soul's all ready tuh go? Las' night I seen a vision.

I seen mah lill' gal a comin' foh me in a gret white chariot, wid white horses an' de angels. Ize gwine tuh go. I don' want no moah tuh keep me heah."

Some days later he died and was laid to rest by the "burying society" to which he had so long paid his dues.

Rose was inconsolable, and promptly invested her savings in some "mawnin." She wore what might perhaps be termed "half mourning" at the first, appearing about a year later in full "widow's weeds." When questioned as to the wherefore of so strange a proceeding she said :

"I coulden' no ways afford tuh git it at de fust, an' anyhow de longer he's gone de wuss I feels."



Pauliny

PAULINY.

“Ole Mistah Rabbit he run roun’ de house,
Ole Mistah Rabbit he run roun’ de house,
Run fas’, or Brer Fox he catch him!”



JUST that refrain from an old negro melody haunts me, when I think of Pauliny, for many years an aggravating, but altogether competent servant. She used to sing to us in the evenings, and tell us old folk-lore stories. Bits of Bre'r Bar's story, and the antics of Cub and Chub were her particular delight.

Pauliny used to do her hair up in little tight, twine-wound fingers, and over this she would pin a wig of buffalo hair. The Southwestern negress of that day considered a “buffalo wig” as one of the most desirable of possessions, and those fortunate enough to own one wore it on state occasions.

Pauliny was sure to be at home after nightfall,

having a wholesome fear of what she called "dem medics." She said "I jess can't bar tuh heah 'bout de way dey pickles cullud pussons an' puts dem in bar'l's till deys ready foah tuh cut dem up."

One night there was a terrible fire in the city; the bluffs were as light as though covered by a million bonfires; the tree branches standing out as though etched against the glowing sky; the light as bright as day, and bits of burning wood blowing through the air! Pauliny was frightened almost to death; she got down on her knees and apologized to God for the error of her ways, and begged and pleaded for mercy, promised to be converted at once, and then said, "No, Lord, dis heah ain't no Sodom, an' you needn' buhn up de whole city jess on mah 'count!"

Her religion was much like that of the little girl who for three nights had refused to say her prayers and who, when her mother expostulated, said: "Nussin' didn' det me las' night; I ain't doin' to say 'em zis

night or to-morrow night, an' zen if nussin' don't det me, I ain't ever doin' to say em adain.'

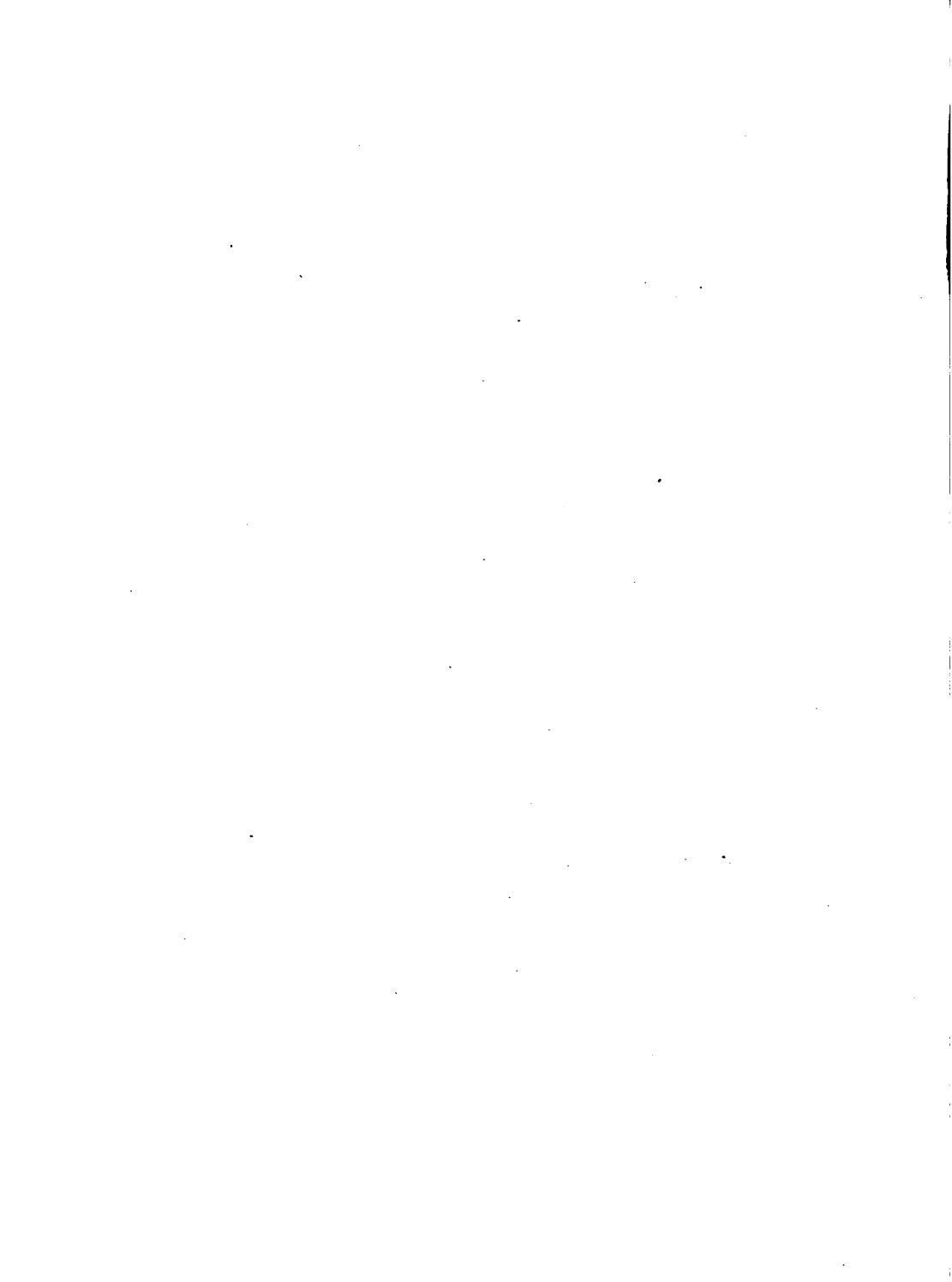
Pauliny's name was of course Pauline, but she called it Pauliny, with a long drawn accent on the "iny." She was a "likely gal" and had various beaus, to the charms of one of whom she finally succumbed. "Mistah Sil-lus" was a tall yellow man, and the owner of a flourishing barber-shop. We children had the fun of choosing gifts for the wedding, and promised ourselves much pleasure, when we were to go and see our Pauliny in all the glory of a white veil and orange blossoms. "The best laid plans of mice and men"—you know the rest; and in this case it was I who caused them to "gang agley." I fell from a tree on the morning of the wedding day, and the family spent the wedding hour attending to my somewhat grievous hurts.

The years slipped away, and were numbered with the yesterdays; and for Pauliny the end of recorded time came about the year eighteen hundred and eighty.

"Mistah Sillus" said: "She is suttinly gone straight tuh glory, foh she always wuz de bes' dress' woman in ouah church an' de devoutes'. She done got 'ligion at de time ob de gret fiah, an' she neveh slid back, foh she said one fiah wuz nuff foh huh—shuah!"

Julie

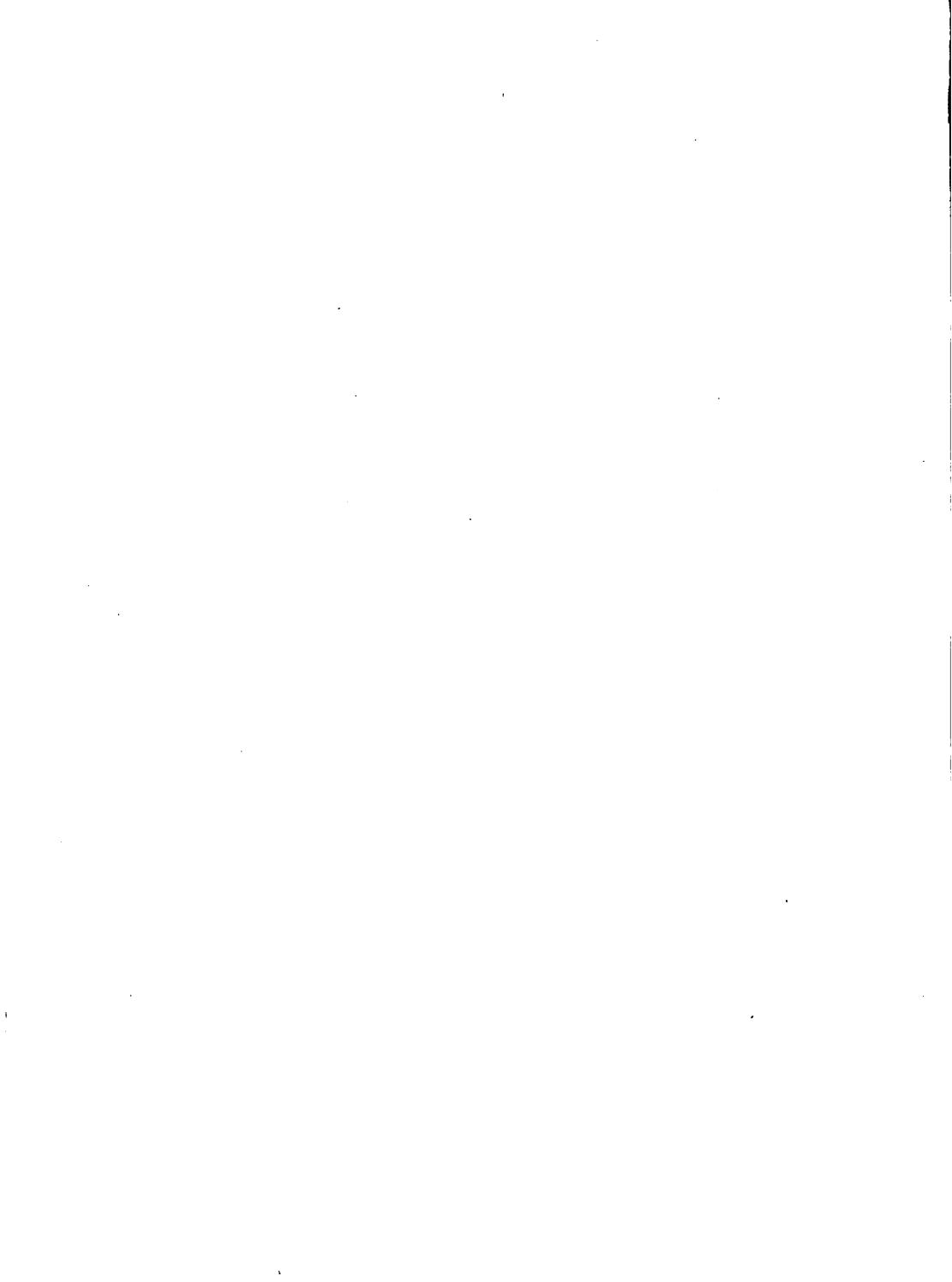
(103)





SHE LEANED ON HER LITTLE, SAGGING GATE.

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JULIE.



ULIE is for the most part a very dim and distant shadow, but one thing about her I have never forgotten, although I was a very little child when it happened.

Julie lived on Turkey Creek. The city was young then. The creek was the boundary line between the country and the city. Delightful wild flowers grew on its banks; Sunday schools went there for picnics; small boys ran away and went there to fish. Today it is a great covered sewer. Then, along its banks, were occasional huts where the negroes lived, little frame or log cabins perched close on the edge of the stream, and fenced in with old Virginia rail-fences.

Julie was the family laundress and had proved most faithful, but on one occasion she failed to appear. One, two, three weeks passed, and no Julie. Mother began to feel that perhaps the woman was ill, and so one

sunny afternoon she drove her pony down the steep hill, and we went to see what had become of Julie. Down the somewhat dangerous slope we drove, past great boulders where men were at work blasting.

How we had to watch for the "blasters." A man wearing a bright red flannel shirt would run out into the road, waving his arms and shouting warnings to the passers by. Every one would wait, and presently there would be a puff of smoke, white like a cloud, a loud report, some bits of stone flying, some rocks rent, and then every one was at liberty to go on down the hillside, seeing in the distance the waters of the Missouri sparkling in the sun, and the Kansas river winding its shining way to the West. Down, down the steep hill—where now a noisy, useful cable car rushes—the pony picked his way, and after a time we were again on level ground.

As we drove along the creek bank, Mother inquired of various negroes as to the whereabouts of Julie's house, and finally she found it. It was a single cabin,

just one room, made of old weather-boards, and the little yard was enclosed with a rail fence, on which hung various garments and quilts. The yard was bare, save for a huge locust tree, and so tramped over and swept that it was like a clean, hard table of earth. A few chickens and one or two ducks were scratching about, and Julie herself was seated in front of the house. When she saw Mother, she arose at once and came to her little sagging gate.

“Why! Miss May, whar you done come f’um? Is you come tuh see whar I bin?”

Mother said that was what she had come for, and then Julie explained her absence. She was an uncommonly tall old woman, and very black, and her voice was deep like a man’s voice. I was always a little in awe of her.

“Ize in mawnin’,” said Julie.

“Mourning?” queried Mother. “Why, Julie, for whom? What is the trouble?”

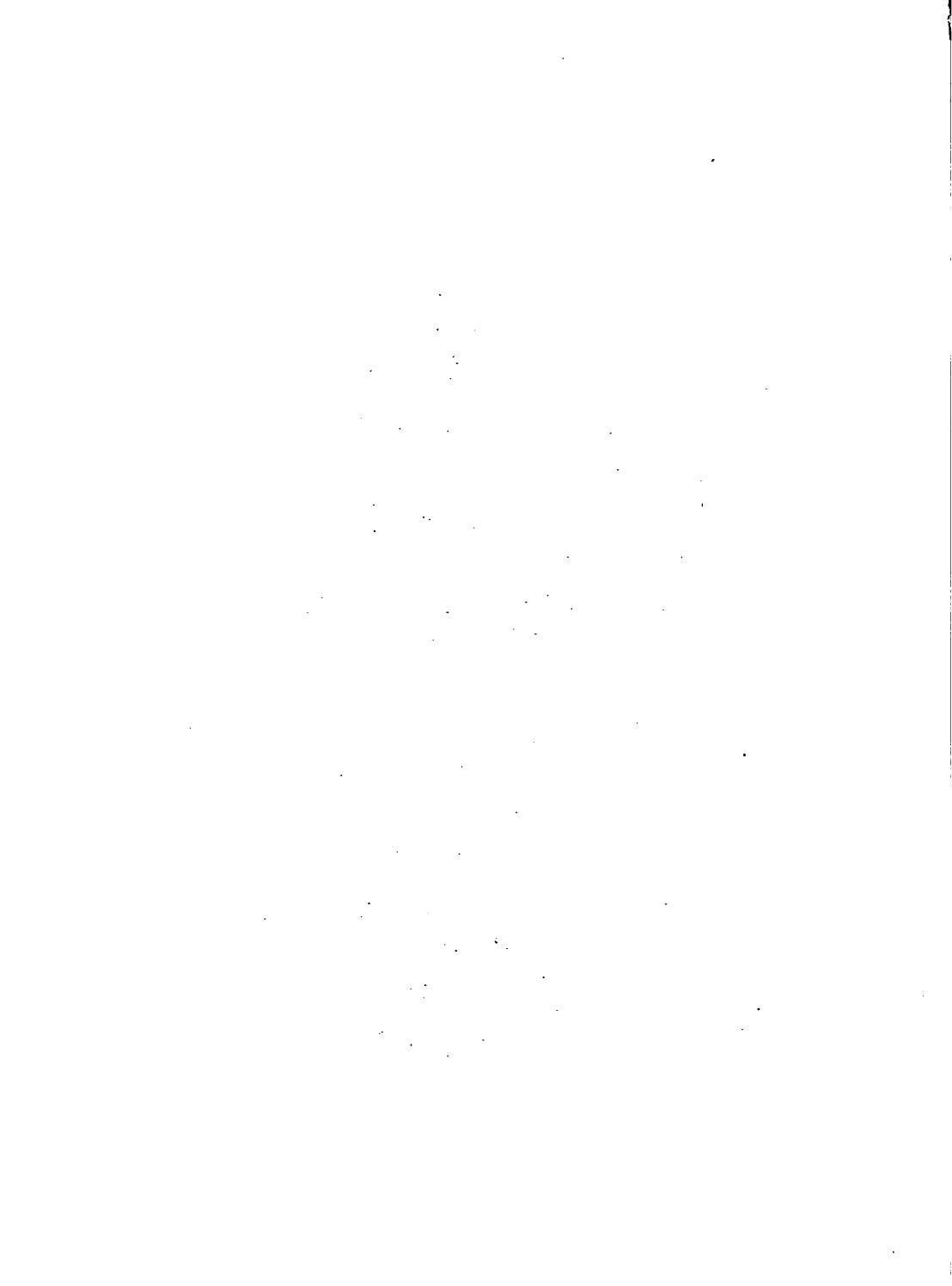
Julie took a whiff at her pipe, and then in the most placid manner announced:

“Mah ole man’s daid. He done drownded. He wuz a-sittin’ on de fence back yondah, a-smokin’ his pipe, an’ his back war tuh de creek, an’ he los’ his balance an’ he jess fell in.”

Mother was shocked, and asked if nothing had been done to save him.

“Yes’m, yes’m,” said Julie. “Yes’m, yes’m, we done fish him out, an’ he still got his pipe in his teef. We-uns couldn’t do nothin’ foh him, nohow. Hung him ovah de fence foh de watah tuh run out, an’ he done drip—an’ drip—an’ drip—but he nevah did come to.”

From 'the Kingdom o' Colloway





SALINA GABRIELLE.
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FROM THE KINGDOM O' CALLOWAY.

ETER the Great was not a czar but he bore himself with great dignity, for he had come up to Westport town from Calloway County, or as it is known in old Missouri, "The Kingdom o' Calloway."

The Kingdom o' Calloway lies about in the center of the state, and is truly a land of plenty. The Marmadukes, the Clays, and the Lacklands, are still lords of the soil, as in ante-bellum days, and but few, very few, of the old serfs or their descendants have moved away.

"You kin always tell de quality f'um Calloway—dey walks so biggety," the darkies would say, and imitating the quality, they too walked "biggety."

Peter the Great was part Indian, part negro, and had there been no bronze tint to his skin, his quiet step and silent ways would have proclaimed the Indian blood. He came to Westport town and found occupation as a

general utility man, but he also found something more—he found Salina Gabrielle.

Salina Gabrielle, too, was part Indian, with copper colored skin and straight black hair, and the bearing of a fairy-story princess.

Uncle Ephraim Johnson had found her when she was a baby, just before the close of the war, and he had taken her home to his cabin, to be one of his own.

Mammy Jane had given her her name, and had loved her and cuffed her about, as she did her own dusky brood. "She might be de spittin' image of huh motha or huh fatha, but you can't tell, anyhow she ain't nevah been sol' foh money," and Mammy Jane's eyes grew dim as she recalled the long ago day when she had been put on the slave block—a little helpless maid—and sold away from her mother.

Salina Gabrielle came up to the big house by and by, to learn to be a housemaid; but the process was slow, for the children loved to coax her away to share their play. She would bring stones for the little houses, over

the walls of which one could so conveniently step, and into all parts of which the sun shone. She could pole a raft on the pond, and was the best of sentinels when the children played "Swiss Family Robinson" in their big walnut tree. She it was who always went into the house to "fess up" when some particularly naughty piece of mischief had been done. Up the drive she would walk, singing as she went:—

"Is you gwine tuh tell you mammy on me?

I don' care, Ize free, Ize free."

For years she struggled to learn how to tell time, but she did not seem to be able to do it. She would always insist upon it that the short hand on the clock's face was the minute hand, "foh because minnits dey is sur-tinly sho'tah dan ouahs."

Like most of her race, Salina Gabrielle, was a staunch believer in ghosts, or as they call them "hants." One still summer night, the family had all gone to sleep, but the windows and doors were open, for the night was a very hot one. The master was awakened

by a noise without, as though a horse were tramping down the sod and flowers. Going to a window he saw that some cows had broken into his yard, and were browsing about near his flower beds. Hastily robing himself, in garments principally white, he started down to drive the cows out of the yard. In the hall he picked up a carriage whip and the cows were driven down the slope and out at the gateway. Just as he gave a parting crack of the whip, to frighten the cows, he heard a most unearthly yell, and the sound of human feet flying quickly by.

The next morning when the negroes came over from their cabins, there was great excitement.

“Did you-all know dere wuz a hant ovah heah las’ night?”

“No! Tell us about it.”

“Well,” said Salina Gabrielle, “jess as Andrew Jackson wuz a comin’ f’um Ahmstrong, whar he done bin tuh see his gal, he wuz a-passin’ you-all’s place, an’ way up yondah, undah de shadow ob you-all’s trees, he



PETER THE GREAT.

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made any conditions that he chose, for where Salina Gabrielle was, there Peter intended to be.

They were rather a silent pair, and when Peter's wooing was done, no one knew save Salina. One lovely Indian Summer day, the *wanderlust* took possession of them both, and they disappeared into the woods. Peter went first and Ephraim said "he'd just gone a-fishin'." After a while Salina Gabrielle disappeared, and later they were together on the banks of the Little Blue.

Peter had good luck with his fishing that day, and Salina Gabrielle cooked him a dinner which would have tempted an anchorite to eat.

Early in the day she built a bonfire between two logs, and then she laid some stones in it to heat. When there was a pile of hot ashes ready, she put potatoes and corn on the stones and covered them over with the ashes. From somewhere she produced a long-handled skillet, in which later she fried the fish.

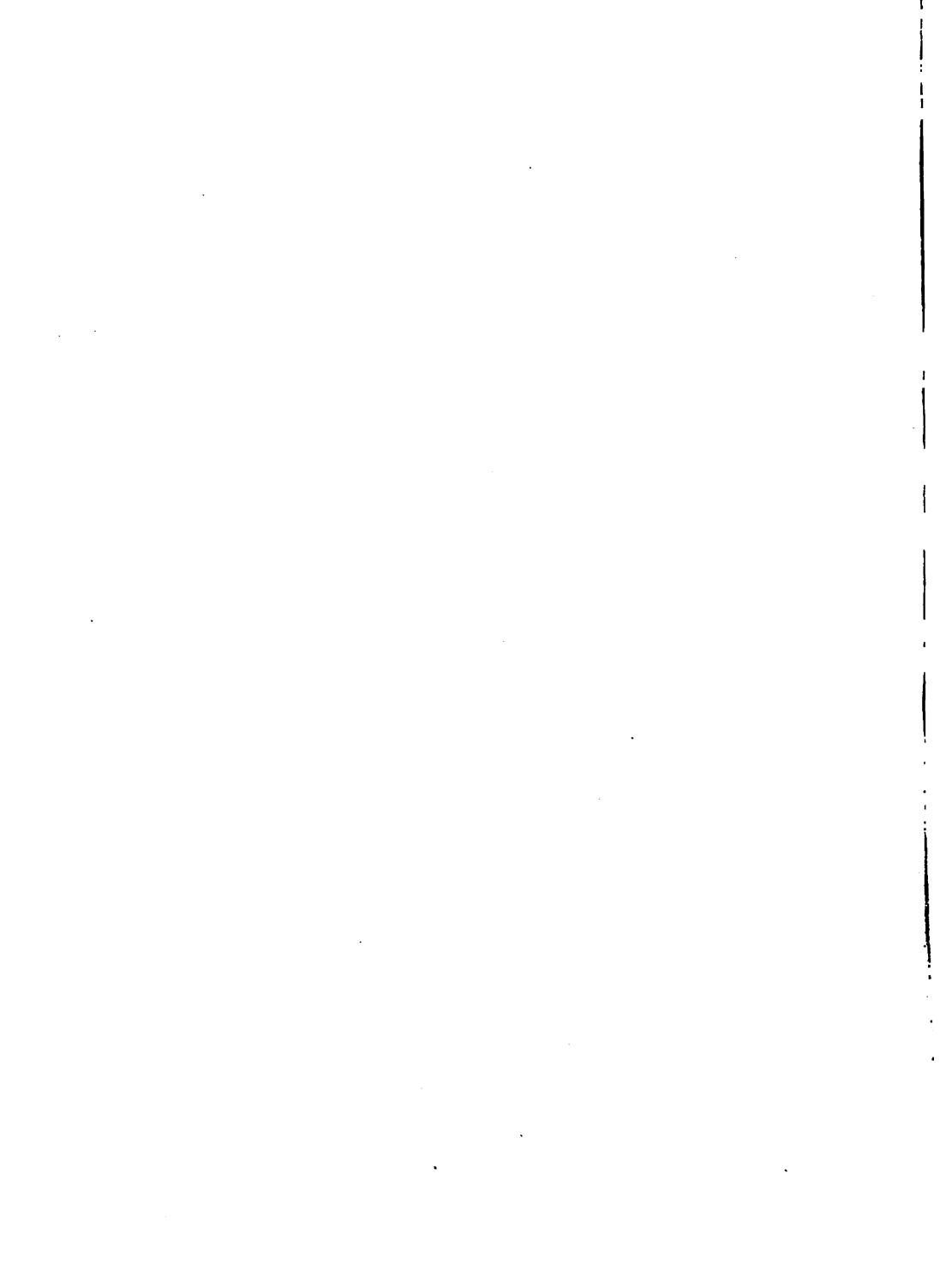
Peter caught the fish, but true to his Indian blood, he let Salina Gabrielle do the rest of the work, and she served him without question.

Several days later they came home again, and Peter asked for the little cabin next to Ephraim's, in which to continue the primitive housekeeping that had begun with that first dinner on the banks of the Little Blue.

Uncle Ephraim was not satisfied. "Dey's got tuh be a sure nuff weddin' an' its gwine tuh be in de Baptis' church. Brotha Turnah he's a comin' tomorrow and we's gwine tuh tell all de folks tuh be that."

The next evening the little church was crowded with all of the colored people from the neighboring places. Bright cotton gowns, and flower trimmed hats, and here and there second-hand finery—the much prized gift of some white woman—adorned the women and made the place look gay.

There had been a wedding at the big house, some weeks before, at which the Bishop had officiated. The



seen somethin' white a comin' at him, an' when it got neah tuh him, it wuz a big hant with hohns an' a long fiery tail."

As she grew older, Salina Gabrielle learned to read and to write a little, but she could not be induced to carry her education beyond that point. She grew to be a faithful, trusty servant, but there were times when she simply could not stand civilized life, and she would run away and be gone for days. Especially would she be restless when the red-bud flowered, and spring hung out her flower-decked banners; and again the haze of Indian summer would lure her off to the woods to search for persimmons and nuts. On her return from one of these pilgrimages she first saw Peter the Great.

Peter had just been engaged as a permanent helper on the place, and was standing, hat in hand, at one of the long French windows that opened from the library onto the gallery at the back of the house. As Salina Gabrielle came up the broad steps, Peter knew his mate at a glance, and the master of the house might have

house servants had been interested spectators, and now this was their first chance at having one "like de quality."

How Ephraim and Jane had managed it all, no one will ever know, but some minutes after the appointed hour, "Brotha Turnah" and Peter marched solemnly up the aisle. "Brotha Turnah" clad in a long black robe, and Peter in an old suit of his master's, with collars and cuffs very much in evidence. Reaching the end of the aisle they faced about and stood in front of the little hair-cloth sofa, awaiting the advent of the bride. The next to appear was Aunt Jane; fat, smiling, dignified; wearing a tight, beaded, black Jersey and a long black skirt, and fanning herself vigorously with a turkey feather fan. She, too, went to the end of the aisle and faced the congregation, to the evident dismay of "Brotha Turnah."

"How come you standin' up heah, Sistah Jane? You go an' set wid you family; jess de bride's fatha stan's heah wid we-all."

"What dat you sayin' Brotha Turnah?" and she made a threatening gesture toward him with her fan. "Nothin', nothin', Sistah Jane; you all right; I reckon you bettah stan' jess whar you are."

After an appreciable pause came the bride and Uncle Ephraim. She in a dress of white and a long tarleton veil, which Aunt Jane had furnished, and the young ladies had pinned on with loving care. In her arms she held a huge bunch of yellow chrysanthemums, from Aunt Jane's little garden, and Peter's eyes glowed with pride as they rested on her.

With the old type of the negro race, immoralities, as some men count them, do not mean much. Peter had known that Salina Gabrielle was his mate when he saw her; he would, with a comparatively clear conscience, have taken the life of any man whom she might have preferred before him, and "the weddin,'" he endured, because Uncle Ephraim had insisted upon it, and it pleased the bride.

The ceremony was a long one, and when "Brotha

Turnah," imitating the Bishop, asked: "Who gives dis heah woman tuh dis man?" Ephraim stepped grandly forward and bowing profoundly, with his hat in his hand, answered: "I, Ephraim Johnson!"

The next day Peter was in the library waiting for some orders.

"By the way" said his master, "I want to make you and Salina Gabrielle a little present. Will you take this check to the bank for me, and the cashier will give you the money? How do you spell your name?"

"Petah de Great, sah," he said.

"No, no, your own name."

"Petah de Great," reiterated the darkey.

"Spell it, then," said his master.

"Wuh! Wuh! What's de use ob all dese heah books?" pointing to the well filled shelves, "an' all you learnin' an' can't spell a little ting like dat."

So his master wrote it "Peter the Great" and the bank honored the check.







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